New Statesman

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LISTEN WITH BOTHA

MAREK KOHN: Red Wedge goes to Italy

GEOFF DYER: A Brixton diary

CLAUDIA WRIGHT: Moroccan mirage

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Listening link with apartheid
DUNCAN CAMPBELL and PATRICK FORBES reveal how Britain is providing intelligence to help Botha et al crush liberation struggles 10

HOME

Peter Kellner: Liberty's close shave 9
John Garrett: Labour lost in its policy mountains 12
Andrew Roth: The Lords III — repertory at its worst 14

FOREIGN

Claudia Wright: Moroccan king's myopics move 17
Jonathan Mirsky: Deng magics up democracy 18

WEEKEND

Short story by Carol Lake 20

ARTS

Benedict Nightingale: Curtain call 22
Peter Hillmore: Television 23
Adam Mars-Jones: Cinema 24
Naseem Khan: Work in progress at the Commonwealth Arts Festival 25
Charles Fox: Summer jazz festivals 25

BOOKS

Martin Chalmers: Germany's publishing *Szene* 26
Paul May: Poem 27
Val Wilmer: Ronnie Scott 27
Alan Brien: Paperbacks 28
Josephine Saxton: Science fiction 29

BACKCHAT

Marek Kohn: Red Wedge in Naples 30
Weekend competition 30
Salamanca 31

PLUS

Scrutiny 8
Mediawatch: John Ellis 15
Slump 15
Diary: Geoff Dyer 16
Roger Woddis 16
Letters 19
Janis Goodman 35
Chess: George Botterill 35
This England 35

NEXT WEEK

COOKING THE FIGURES

At last 'the computer' has spewed out the definitive analysis of the May local elections: Labour's ROBIN COOK MP reveals all.

SOUND MONEY

A special *New Statesman* guide for the ethical investor and consumer: who to bank with, and the ideological pros and cons of buying Nescafé.

SOFT-COVER SHUFFLE

ALISON FELL sifts through the latest paperback re-issues.

RUSTY BY-WAYS

In the run-up to autumn party conferences ('the silly season') IAN WILLIAMS startles the fauna in some of the Labour movement's more overgrown corners.

DESIRE AT THE MOVIES

COLIN GORDON reviews the new film theory of Gilles Deleuze, co-author of *Anti-Oedipus*.

SLAVE LANGUAGE?

Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o (above) argues that new African literatures should not be written in the English language: ADEWALE MAJA-PEARCE discusses *Decolonising the Mind*, Ngugi's last non-African words on the subject.

New Statesman

Vol 112 No 2888 1 August 1986

Sir Geoffrey fails to do the impossible

THERE IS ONLY one explanation for the catastrophically bungled way in which Mrs Thatcher has handled South Africa. It is that she is essentially racist.

Of course she manages to mouth the necessary words about how abhorrent she finds the system of apartheid. But there is none of the Thatcher passion of voice or gesture when she does so. Instead she goes out of her way to stress the 'reforms' that the Pretoria regime has instigated and spares no effort in making clear her total contempt for the views of those who argue in favour of sanctions.

For Mrs Thatcher, South Africa is a 'white' country and she gives every sign of hoping that events will keep it that way. She clearly enjoyed her visit to the Republic several years ago and her husband has long had satisfactory business connections with white South Africa. On top of that comes Reaganesque nonsense about South Africa (white, of course) being a bastion of capitalism against the creeping menace of Communism and armchair naval strategy theories about South Africa's strategic importance in the South Atlantic shipping routes, which come from the age of sail and used to exercise Sir Alec Douglas-Home.

When she talks about South Africa, there is the very clear impression that the notion of a country given over to the political principle of one person one vote is almost as alien to Mrs Thatcher as it is to President Botha. In telling Sir Geoffrey Howe to stop meddling in things he did not understand, Botha said that what Howe wanted by 'constructive dialogue' would 'inevitably have the end result of jeopardising the self-determination of the groups and communities in our multi-cultural country'. The words were code for the obvious fact that under any system of even half-real democracy the minority, Afrikaner-dominated white tribe of Africa would lose its political and economic control of South Africa. It is a code to which, according to all the evidence, our Prime Minister subscribes.

Certainly, as we describe on page 10, Mrs Thatcher has allowed our secret intelligence services to share information with white South Africa about the comings and goings of the ANC and other exiled groups opposed to the Botha regime. That is not a neutral act. It is a positive act of support for the apartheid regime. It will have been seen as such in Pretoria. It will equally have been seen as such in the rest of black Africa.

It is an indication of a frame of mind towards South Africa that explains why Mrs Thatcher was for so long so reluctant to engage in even symbolic gestures of disapproval, such as withdrawing military attachés from our diplomatic mission. It certainly explains why Mrs Thatcher has waged a one person campaign within the Commonwealth against sanctions ever since the Nassau

NS computer goes on holiday . . .

Because of a major computer breakdown in our subscriptions department last week, some subscribers may have experienced problems in receiving the *NS*. If you appear to be affected, please let us know and we will gladly forward copies of any missing issues. We hope to be back to normal within a week. Meanwhile, our apologies .

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Commonwealth summit last autumn. 'If I was the odd one out, but I were right, it wouldn't matter, would it?' was how Mrs Thatcher summed up her attitude to South Africa earlier this year.

The remark contains exactly her own view of what should be done about South Africa, namely the white South African government should be defended against its external foes and against its own internal stupidities to the best of the British government's limited ability. It also contains her obstinate disregard for any other point of view, even — perhaps particularly — when it is held by the (black) majority of the Commonwealth.

THE HOWE 'mission' has attracted a 50/50 mixture of derision and sympathy. Our affable country solicitor, shaped like a pear, accepts an impossible brief and sets off for Africa where (correctly) no one of substance — black or white — thinks that anything he has to say is of the slightest relevance to the civil war that is in progress. So eventually he is told to stop meddling and go home.

The country solicitor, being basically sensible, knew that this was always going to be the outcome — or would have done if he had read the *New Statesman* on 11 July before he set out. But he had to do his best to preserve his client's dignity and generally comport himself in such a way that she would not feel inclined to dispense with his professional services on his return.

Some thought, though, should also be spared for the man who told him to stop meddling and get out — State President Botha. What the Reagan White House (and its 10 Downing St annex) hoped was that the said Botha could be persuaded to make not some 'quantum leap' forward (that would have been expecting too much) but some 'quantum symbolic gesture'.

If, for example, Botha had released Nelson Mandela — even put him on a plane to London against his wishes — the White House would have been able to head off sanctions legislation on Capitol Hill and the right and centre of the Tory Party here could have used the event for months, perhaps even a year or more, as evidence that real 'progress' was being made in South Africa. If Pretoria had further announced that it would 'de-ban' the ANC, provided Oliver Tambo gave 'solemn and binding' assurances that it was renouncing the armed struggle, much effective right-wing propaganda could have been made out of the ANC's quite correct refusal to do so.

It is a measure of the political box into which the Botha government is painted that it was unable even to make these essentially meaningless gestures, even though their sole purpose would have been to help South Africa's friends in the White House and in Downing Street to help South Africa.

The white tribe has gone into its laager because the final civil war against white rule in southern Africa has started. Any Nationalist President who released Mandela for whatever reason would be committing political suicide with his white electorate. The tracks of white and black politics in South Africa are now diverging so ineluctably that the concept of dialogue and compromise is ludicrous. Sir Geoffrey, in truth, knew that before he set off to waste his time and the taxpayer's money. It remains to be seen whether on his return he can finally get the message into her racist skull. □

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LE VICE ANGLAIS: STILL NOT QUITE BEATEN

LE VICE ANGLAIS is far from dead, despite the euphoria surrounding the Commons' decision, by just one vote, to ban caning in state schools. DAVID RUDNICK explains

Mary Evans Picture Library

THE CANE remains very much on the curriculum in the private sector, though not for children whose fees are state subsidised. This will add an ironic twist to the class division already existing in private schools — between children whose parents pay their fees and those on assisted places. The former category will continue to be exposed to beating (a dubious, if not entirely new concept in social privilege), while their poorer brethren will be protected by the state ban on corporal punishment.

Thus independent schools which opt to keep the cane will find themselves operating exactly the kind of two-tier system, with caning for some pupils but not others, that the government has understandably been so anxious to avoid in state schools.

The roots of this anomaly go back to a judgment by the European Court of Human Rights on a Scottish case (Campbell and Cosans versus the UK) in 1982. The Strasbourg court ruled that the offspring of parents opposed to corporal punishment should not be subject to caning, out of respect for their parents' wishes. What the Court definitely did not say was that caning per se was an unacceptable form of punishment.

Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (to which the UK has subscribed since its inception) states: 'no one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.' But these were not the grounds on which the Human Rights Court objected to caning in the British state system. The Court based its ruling instead on Article 2 of the first protocol to the Human Rights Convention, viz: 'In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the state shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.'

Parents' rights upheld

What the Court ordained, in effect, was that parents have a human right to decide whether their sons and daughters should or should not be caned at school. The Court certainly did not say that caning constitutes degrading punishment, or that it is an infringement of children's human rights and should therefore be abolished. The operating principle was freedom of (parental) choice rather than any a priori moral judgment on the practice of corporate punishment.

The British government was therefore not urged to ban caning in state schools, merely to ensure that parents had a choice of beating and non-beating schools. Indeed, far from signifying an end to caning, the European Court's ruling — that the state must respect parental convictions — could paradoxically ensure its survival. If parents actually choose to have their offspring caned 'in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions', then facilities will have to be provided to meet their requirements.

Fearful symmetry?

If the Strasbourg court's ruling is applied logically and consistently, symmetry demands the provision of schools practising corporal punishment co-existing with the non-beating kind. And if corporal punishment is outlawed in all state schools, then the only way to ensure the human right to have one's child beaten will be to maintain a private sector of education where it will still be legal.

It is extremely unlikely that the Council of Europe judges at the Court of Human Rights had the slightest intention of providing a back-handed fillip to private, as opposed to state-run education. Their recent dismissal of the compensation claims of nationalised UK shipbuilders certainly showed no bias whatever against the public sector; arguably the contrary. But one of the least remarked, and possibly most significant long-term results of the 1982 Strasbourg ruling and its current aftermath in the Commons, could be the perpetuation of a private 'beating' sector to meet the needs of well-heeled parents of the old school. ●

British Coal keeps asking the sneaky questions

'WHAT do you think of the present government?' members of NACODS, the pit deputies' union, say they were asked by Harris pollsters. And: 'what state do you think the country is in now?'

NACODS members were then asked 20 questions about the coal industry. The questioners, who were conducting their research at Kellingly, North Yorkshire, and Markham, North Derbyshire, didn't mention that the poll had been commissioned by British Coal, nor that it was the work of Tommy Thomson, the former Tory Central Office official who is one of Sir Ian MacGregor's key public relations advisors.

British Coal strongly denies that the questionnaire contained political questions. A spokesperson said that the poll was part of a nationwide survey of the mining communities: 'It was designed to improve general communications in the industry and improve training and safety facilities.'

Strangely, Sir Robert Haslam, British Coal's new chief executive and chairperson-designate, appeared to know nothing about the survey. And according to leading NACODS figures, neither did the Board's area directors. Last Friday morning, Haslam visited Kellingly colliery, accompanied by his chief industrial relations executive, John Northard and Albert Tuke, North Yorkshire's Area Director. While in the conference room of the colliery, two NACODS officials approached Haslam and Tuke to complain about the poll. According to the officials, Haslam looked amazed at the news, and turned to Tuke, who commented: 'I know something about this, but I don't know who commissioned it.' He then walked across the room and asked Northard, who confirmed that it had been authorised by Tommy Thomson on behalf of British Coal.

Thomson, a former *Daily Mail* political editor, did similar private polling for MacGregor during the miners' strike. (*NS* 16 May 1986). Harris did monthly surveys throughout the dispute. Some of the questions asked miners whether they thought the strike was worthwhile and what they expected to achieve. Thomson is particularly keen on polls, and has his own company, Opinion, Research and Communications, which uses the Harris Research Centre to do its fieldwork and interviewing.

NACODS is furious about the survey. Peter McNestry, the union's general secretary, said that the poll was another example of McGregor's strategy of bypassing the unions. Peter Hardy, NACODS-sponsored Labour MP for Wentworth, attacked the survey as 'outrageous' and 'disgraceful'. He has written to Peter Walker, the energy secretary, complaining that British Coal 'has no right to seek information in this underhand way.'

Mark Hollingsworth

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How on earth did the Wendy Savage case happen?

WENDY SAVAGE wasn't the first doctor to be suspended and found innocent of the charges against her after a year's wait — at the press conference following her reinstatement she talked of other similar cases. But with luck she may be the last to be trapped in a disciplinary procedure which invests huge powers of discretion in the hands of the health authority chair. For the Department of Health and Social Security and the British Medical Association have in the last week been making quiet overtures to get together and revise the now notorious circular 112, used to put her out of action for 15 months.

Now that Savage has been cleared it's time to ask why the 58 charges of incompetence were ever brought against her, when only one of substance — that she did not in every case attain the highest possible standards of care — was upheld, why it dragged on so long and why such a poor health authority squandered over £100,000 in the charade.

According to Savage's solicitor, Brian Raymond, at least two people could have provided the necessary checks and balances and intervened to persuade Francis Cumberlege, health authority chair, that the charges wouldn't stand up before he embarked on the long and expensive procedure. Those people are Dr Jean Richards, the District Medical Officer and Professor Michael Floyer, Dean of the Medical School.

One of the many things the case highlighted is the archaic and unjust way that disciplinary procedures are handled in the NHS. When Wendy Savage received her letter of suspension it was the first she knew about the charges against her. There had been no verbal or written warning. The fact that her colleagues were amassing evidence to use against her without her knowledge was criticised in off-the-cuff remarks during the tribunal by one of the ajudicators, Professor Peter Howie.

The man who suspended her, Francis Cumberlege, is an administrator with no formal medical training, who took his advice from Professor Grudzinkas — and he had pledged to get rid of Savage when he took over the department. Moreover, many doctors have objected to the way that only five specially selected cases out of the thousands handled by Savage were used to judge her competence. When Dr Paul Noone, chair of the NHS Consultants' Association wrote to Cumberlege, saying that 'It certainly looks as though a difference in clinical practice is not being dealt with as it should; by research and an essentially scientific and professional approach,' and suggesting Cumberlege take a wider range of medical advice, Cumberlege replied praising Grudzinskas and head of department Trevor Beedham for 'running a forward looking department in complete harmony.'

The local Community Health Council (CHC), one of the few bodies monitoring the health authorities, wasn't consulted over the suspension. A statutory body with no statutory powers, the District Health Authority is obliged to consult the CHC only on matters affecting patient services — though Tower Hamlets CHC chair Christine Smith points out that Savage's suspension had quite a dramatic effect on services.

The disciplinary procedure used against Savage was drawn up in 1961 and is widely regarded as badly out of date. It refers to bodies and boards which no longer exist and sits uneasily in the changed structure of the health service. Most worryingly, it divests power from the full DHA and gives enormous powers of discretion to the DHA chair — in this case, Cumberlege, himself an anachronistic figure who was heard referring to the attendance of the public at CHC meetings as 'invasion of the mob'. 'It is quite amazing that he has been put in charge of health care in one of the poorest areas in Europe', says Raymond.

Although Cumberlege now says he has no regrets, sixteen local GPs are asking for his resignation and for Grudzinskas to find another job — but who will discipline the people at the top?

Jane Dibblin

Guardian

Ilkan Mehmet

Professor Grudzinkas, (left) whose views on Savage (right) got the ball rolling

It's not just Tories who want to sell off schools

PROPERTY SPECULATION can be as easy as robbing a crippled child. Or so the parents of the 48 mentally and physically handicapped children in Liverpool's Palmerston Special School are discovering. They were given two shocks for an end of term treat. They, the governors and staff were told that the school was closing for good the following day, and secondly that the premises which had originally been earmarked for them were part of the 'Sale of the Century', in which almost every available asset of the city has been put up for sale.

The school premises are being closed because, despite being initially reassured that asbestos tests on the school were negative, the parents got their hands on the reports, and found one with a reading close to the industrial safety limit. The premises which the council is now suggesting are also partially constructed, say the parents' surveyors, of asbestos cement sheeting, and are two storeys high. They will also cost over £300,000 to refurbish, and are unlikely to be ready before the end of September.

By contrast, the alternative which the council originally had in mind, 'Holmrook', is a purpose built single storey school for handicapped. It's described in the sales brochure as 'suitable for institutional, educational, or possibly office use.' It is also rather valuable.

The parents are going to the District Auditor to ask him to intervene to prevent the sale of Holmrook and the waste of money. Terry Fields, the Militant-supporting constituency MP, has privately pledged support for the parents. But his position is made difficult by the fact that all such decisions have been taken under delegated powers by Tony Byrne, Chair of the Finance and Strategy Committee, who has manouevred Militant through so many scrapes in the past.

Ian Williams

Future of the species under the hammer

LAST WEEK the government announced yet another privatisation: the institutions that control much of the research into Britain's seeds are to be sold off. Less emotive than water, less glamorous than Telecom, the move nonetheless has profound implications for the future of agriculture.

The bodies up for sale are the plant breeding laboratories of the Plant Breeding Institute, and the National Seed Development Organisation. The former researches and develops new varieties of seeds, while the latter markets the results, and trades at a profit. Lining up to buy are the multi-national chemical corporations ICI, Ciba-Geigy and Shell.

Seeds are now big business; in 1978 global seed sales totalled some $10 billion. Since the introduction of Plant Breeders' Rights — which allow breeders to patent plants — in 1967, hundreds of small seed companies have been bought up by agrichemical companies that had previously shown little interest in plant breeding. ICI, which last year spent some £50 million to acquire control of the U.S. Garst Seed Company, is expected to lead the bidding for the PBI and NSDO. The latter, with its marketing expertise and portfolio of some 280 plant patents, would make a useful addition to an emerging seed empire.

There is an unpleasant dimension to the chemical companies' interest in plant breeding. The market for agrichemicals is approaching saturation point. Now, genetic engineering techniques hold out the prospect of plant species that fix their own Nitrogen, and so don't need chemical fertilisers. Similarly, pest-resistant plants that will reduce the need for pesticides are also possible. On the other hand, plant breeding can be used to develop varieties that perform best with chemicals — perhaps even with a particular company's products. For the agrichemicals manufacturers, obtaining some leverage over the way in which plant breeding develops is therefore essential. Happily for them, the Thatcher Government has provided them with an opportunity to extend that leverage by putting an end to one of the few centres of scientific excellence outside corporate control.

Jeremy Green

Grovel

Shocking ineptitude: last week's photographs of Chinua Achebe and Ngugi wa Thiong'o were transposed, so that each was captioned as the other. Apologies. And the author ('*Commonwealth Writers*') was Adam Lively, not Livesy. More apols. ●

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Obstruction has to be for real, say magistrates

POLICE OFFICERS who bring charges of obstruction against demonstrators have to show that some obstruction actually occurred, Guildhall magistrates decided last Thursday. As humble magistrates, their apparently sensible views create no legal precedent. Nevertheless, the NCCL says the case is 'extremely interesting' and has important implications for other demonstrators.

A woman, who asks us not to name her, was part of the Irish Prisoners Action demonstration outside the Old Bailey during the 'seaside bombings' trial in May. The IPA was protesting at the persistent strip searching of two of the accused, Martina Anderson and Ella O'Dwyer. The demonstrators were strung out in a single line against a wall, so there was no possibility of causing a genuine obstruction. Nonetheless, City of London police carried out mass arrests each day. The arrestees were always released without charge — though some were placed on police bail — apart from the above-mentioned woman, who was charged with obstruction of both the police and the highway, as an explicit 'test case'.

Fifteen minutes before the case was tried, the charge of obstructing the police was dropped, and a bind over was offered on the charge of obstructing the highway — but the accused opted for trial. The police gave evidence, but the magistrates decided that as no real obstruction had occured there was no case to answer, and threw the case out.

Charges of phantom obstruction have often been used in the past against court demonstrators and against the Greenham women. Should the Public Order Bill become law, police will have new powers to impose conditions on demonstrations, and in some cases will effectively be able to ban them. In the meantime, some of those arrested outside the Old Bailey are taking civil action against the police — which if successful, *could* create legal precedent.

Sal Jenkinson

Pluto lives to struggle another day

PLUTO PRESS, Britain's foremost publishers of radical books, has jettisoned its distribution company, in an attempt to stay afloat in an increasingly precarious market. Volume Sales, jointly owned by Pluto with Allison and Busby, went into liquidation last week. All six employees were sacked; none of them received any redundancy pay.

Despite being respected as a publisher, Pluto has lost a considerable amount of goodwill because of its bad record at settling its debts. Its advertising bill with *Sanity* went unpaid for 18 months, though this was an exceptional case. It also has a long record of paying its authors badly and late. Its reluctant decision to abandon Volume Sales will not improve its reputation.

Pluto hope that getting rid of the company, which has been losing it money, will give it a breathing space to cover the dead months until the autumn, when it's hoped that sales will pick up. Last year the Rowntree Trust came to the company's aid by buying a slice of its equity. Nina Kidron, Pluto's managing director, denies that the company is about to go under: she says that Pluto has always been on the breadline and that over the financial year she expects it to trade at a profit, and points to a strong autumn list.

Pluto's problem is that it operates in a tricky part of a market that has very nearly collapsed over the last year. Booksellers no longer risk ordering its titles. They now order one or two copies and quickly return them if they don't sell: 'They borrow us instead of buy us', says Kidron. Unlike the big publishers, Pluto's list is short on light summer holiday reading; neither does it have a buffer of perennial bestsellers to see it through the lean times.

Jolyon Jenkins

Spy eyes

ONE OF the more sinister items of equipment likely to be contained in the unmarked 'observation vehicles' which West Midlands police announced last week that they were drafting into areas of high crime, is the 'Evidence Gathering Camera'. Recently developed by the Home Office Scientific Research and Development Branch, it's essentially a video camera/recorder, which looks through a high powered stills camera zoom lens. A crucial part of the package is a 'Davin Modulux 130' light intensifier, which according to one informant, has already been used in Northern Ireland, and identified and photographed a moving suspect under low street lighting at 350 metres. Incorporated in the EGC, it allows the system to function in moonlight or bright starlight.

West Midlands police won't say whether their spy vehicles will be carrying the EGC. But it seems likely, given that they already have one of the three Public Order Surveillance transit vans on loan from the Home Office, which use the light intensifier.

Tim Malyon

MISCELLANY

War tourism

The fish and chip van had to come home and the sheep are too skinny to eat — but people are still determined to make money from the Falklands one way or another. The latest entrepreneurs are two former army officers who have joined forces to arrange package tours to the benighted rocks. For £1995, Battlefield Tours of Sandwich will fix you up with such delights as a visit to the War Graves Commission Cemeteries at Goose Green,

journeys on foot or by Landrover to battle sights such as Mount Tumbledown, a trip to San Carlos, where the first troops landed, and walkabouts in Port Stanley itself, conducted by local residents. (Sir Max Hastings is unfortunately unable to officiate.) One day will also be spend studying wildlife on the islands. The organisers describes the junket as 'a rather unusual and different holiday' and says it is of particular interest to historians and military buffs. Battlefield Tours have been conducting trips to the Somme, Arnhem and Normandy for ten years, so know a lucrative graveyard when they see one.

Do as I say . . .

It appears that Tony Byrne, Liverpool's City Council Finance Supremo is officially unexpellable. He hasn't paid his membership dues for at least two years to his Mossley Hill Constituency, and has failed to answer questions from CLP officers. And trade union officers had their worst suspicions confirmed about the council's philosophy last week. Byrne and other councillors reassured city stewards that it had always been the council's policy to consult unions in advance of closures. 'But you never do it' shouted one disgruntled steward still rankled at last year's 30,000 redundancy notices. 'Don't tell us about what we do or don't do' snapped back Byrne, 'It's what we believe *that counts!'*

Thyme's up

Foodies bringing back local produce from their French holidays may get a little extra for their money these days. Recent samples of thyme and other aromatic herbs in Provence have found levels of Caesium 134 and 137 four times higher than EEC 'acceptable levels'. Herbs, it seems, have been especially hard hit by fallout from Chernobyl but travellers should also beware of goats' cheese from the Ardeche (high Caesium levels) and (an unlikely purchase) leeks from the Vaucluse, now with added Ruthenium.

Toujours la politesse

Herunto we've missed this little gem from behind the Wapping barbed wire, because, of course, we don't ring them up. However, the Sunday Times *rang us for some research help with a piece they were planning on how the Royals get their money. Our researcher rang them back, having checked the NUJ position with the* NS *Chapel parent and waste paper basket officer, to let them know we wouldn't co-operate. She was greeted by this honeyed phrase: 'Good Afternoon, News International, thank you for calling.' 'Gracious', said the startled* NS *research person, 'are you actually instructed to answer the phone like that?' 'Oh yes,' giggled the telephonist. On this occasion they had no cause to thank us at all. Wendy in features was unaware that the NUJ had outlawed her behind the wire.*

How long can it last?

As the Stock Exchange takes a nosedive, so the wisdom of following Collection Can recommendations has become apparent. The smart money will now have earned a rough 90 per cent profit on the millions invested. Selling Woolworth and Blue Circle got you a further 15 per cent and 7 cent respectively, though buying Dixon's cost you 1 per cent. Further price falls are in prospect, with an interest rate hike coming shortly, alongside further chaos in the oil market. So sell Britoil. Funnily enough the oil crisis has given Chicago funster M. Friedman his first substantive claim to be a guru. Back in 1983, when oil cost $25 a barrel, Friedman forecast to universal derision that there could be such a thing as a $5 barrel of oil. Now he doesn't look so silly. Moral: believe monetarists when they are being gloomy, but distrust their optimism.

Lucrative connections

One man who certainly knows how to cash in on current events is Viscount Althorp, Princess Di's 22-year-old brother. Informed sources tell us that his salary for reporting on that *wedding for NBC was not a paltry £10,000, as other sections of the press have reported, but a cool £60,000. Not bad for a day's work . . .*

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RIGHT, LET'S START AGAIN: ONE, TWO . . .

IF THE FIGURES hadn't been fiddled since November 1982, last month's unemployed total would have been over 3.6 million, not 3.2 million. JOHN RENTOUL analyses the gap

SIXTEEN changes have been made to the unemployment count since 1979. Each one is perfectly sensible and justifiable on its own, with one proviso below, but by one of the most remarkable coincidences since Mrs Thatcher launched the Westland leak inquiry only to find herself holding the smoking gun, every single one of those changes has been in a downward direction.

Last month's change — to include the self-employed in the total workforce — is actually sensible in principle. Unemployment ought to be expressed as a percentage of the total available for work, including the self-employed. But while the government has included them in this total — by coincidence on the 'employed' side of the scales — it has excluded hundreds of thousands of people who would otherwise be described as 'unemployed'.

But there was a good reason for excluding the self-employed: the figure is an estimate, and not a very good one. It's projected forward from the 1981 Census on the basis of annual 'Labour Force Surveys'. Over the last three years every estimate of the numbers of self-employed has been revised downwards afterwards.

The proviso is that the official figures are no longer a record of 'unemployment'. They record the number of *benefit claimants* who are looking for work. Most other countries define the unemployed as those who, claiming or not, are actively seeking work. If we counted unemployment in Britain on the same basis as the Americans, we'd have revised the unemployment rate upwards last month, not downwards.

Norman Tebbit's brainwave last weekend about paying the unemployed lower benefits in the South East ought to be laughed out of court. But the last time we said *that* was Mrs Thatcher's plan to stop paying mortgage interest for the first six months of unemployment — which is going ahead. ●

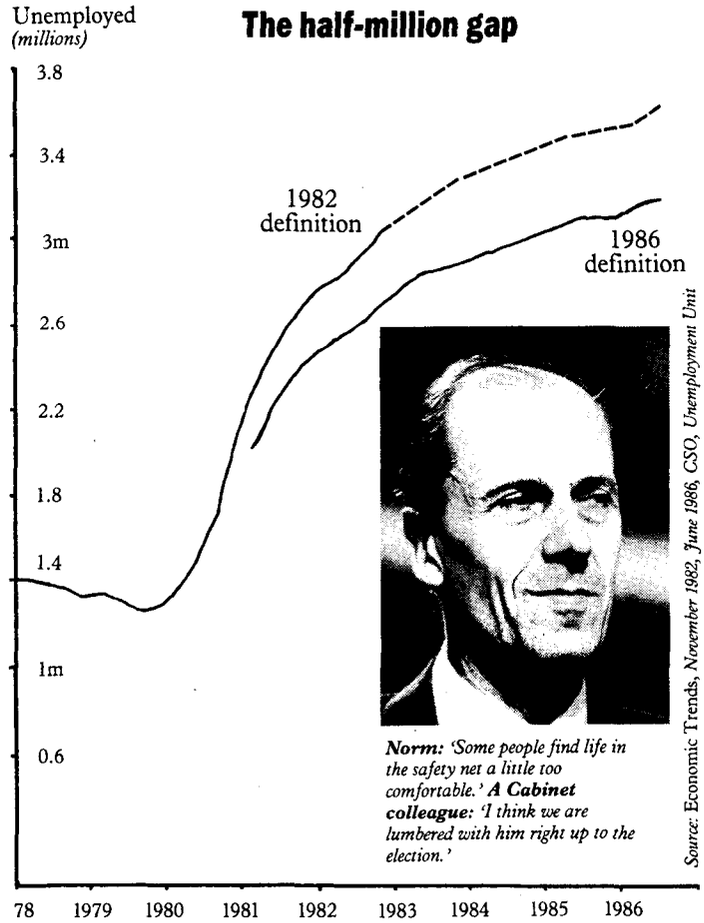
The Changes

		Effect
1	**Oct 1979** Downward adjustment (20,000) to compensate for change to fortnightly benefit payments	nil
2	**Feb 1981** First published estimate of effect of job and training schemes	−495,000
3	**Jul 1981** Temporary downward adjustment (20,000 until Oct 1981) to compensate for DHSS strike	nil
4	**Jul 1981** Men 60 and over who have been unemployed for a year not required to register for work	−30,000
5	**Jul 1982** Unemployment benefit became taxable; a few single parents may have switched to untaxed supplementary benefit	n/a
6	**Oct 1982** Change *from counting those* 'registered for work' to jobless benefit claimants	−200,000
7	**Oct 1982** Publication of number seeking part-time work (less than 30 hours a week) discontinued	−50,000
8	**Apr 1983** Men 59 and over who don't get benefit not required to sign on to get National Insurance credits	−107,000
9	**June 1983** all unemployed men 60 and over not required to register for work	−54,000
10	**June 1983** Delayed effect of change 6 cuts out unemployed school leavers from Jun to Aug each year (not allowed to claim benefit until Sep since 1981)	−150,000*
11	**Oct 1984** Community Programme limited to jobless benefit claimants only (as opposed to non-claimant jobless)	−30,000
12	**Jul 1985** 'Reconciliation' of Northern Ireland DHSS records	−5,000
13	**Jul 1985** Payment of unemployment benefit in arrears	n/a
14	**Mar 1986** Two week delay in making count to 'shake out' those who have just found jobs	−50,000
15	**Mar 1986** Inclusion of estimate for self-employed in total workforce	−1.5%
16	**Jun 1986** No half or three-quarter rate unemployment benefit for those who don't have enough National Insurance credits (announced, not yet implemented)	−57,000

Notes: n/a not available *between 100,000 and 200,000 for 3 months every year

You can't just add up all the changes; some overlap and others, especially the last estimate for change 2, have become extremely unreliable over time.

The half-million gap



Solid lines show official unemployment figures on the old basis (up to October 1982) and on the latest basis (since April 1986, but recalculated back to 1981). The broken line shows the Unemployment Unit estimate of the figures since October 1982 on the old basis.

***Norm:** 'Some people find life in the safety net a little too comfortable.' **A Cabinet colleague:** 'I think we are lumbered with him right up to the election.'*

Source: Economic Trends, November 1982, June 1986, CSO, Unemployment Unit

Politics of envy

It's the rich wot pay no taxes

FOR EVERY £1 the Inland Revenue spends on combating tax evasion and avoidance, £27 of unlawfully unpaid tax is collected. The latest figures reveal a sharp rise in the yield of the 'Special Offices' from £17 for every £1 spent in the previous year (to March 1984).

The yield of the Enquiry Branch has also risen, from £12.50 for each £1 spent to £17.60. The Enquiry Branch handles 'cases of serious fraud in business accounts and cases where the honesty or competence of professional tax advisers is suspect'.

Yet the government insists on pursuing working-class 'ghosts' (in the underground economy) and 'moonlighters' (people with second jobs). Indeed, ministers allowed the Revenue not to cut staff by as much originally demanded so that 180 could be redeployed to these areas.

These figures, in the Inland Revenue's *Report* for 1985, prove that it is overwhelmingly the rich who are defrauding the tax system. Only 1.3 per cent of company accounts and 2.8 per cent of accounts of unincorporated businesses (partnerships, self-employed, etc.) were inspected in depth, but in 91 per cent of cases challenged extra tax was payable, totalling £260 million. In half of these cases, penalties and/or interest was added, indicating more serious offences. The PAYE checks, on the other hand, discovered 'irregularities' in a mere one-third of cases, yielding £65 million at a cost of £1 per £5.50 raised.

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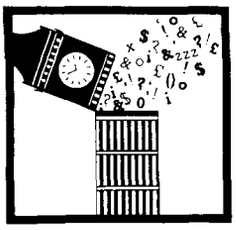

On liberty's close shave — and the MPs who stayed away

IT DESERVES a greater commemoration than it has so far received. Last week, by one vote, MPs finally abolished the use of violence as a legitimate form of punishment. Following the end of capital punishment in the sixties, only schoolchildren have been vulnerable. When the Education Bill receives its Royal Assent, the barbarism of beating children will also be ended.

In recent years, 200,000 instances of corporal punishment have been officially recorded annually — around 1,000 for each school day. Almost every other industrial democracy has banned it. Four years ago the European Court of Human Rights decided, in effect, that corporal punishment as practised in Britain was illegal. Parents who believed that beating was wrong had the right to insist that no corporal punishment be applied to their children.

In its original version of the Education Bill, the government tried something uniquely daft. It sought to maintain corporal punishment, but to allow parents the right to opt out. As Douglas Hogg, the Tory MP for Grantham, where Mrs Thatcher went to school, said of the original bill: 'I served on the Standing Committee . . . I believe that it was nonsense. There cannot be two classes of punishment in one school'.

Thus the impracticality of the government's proposal combined with the general immorality of violence to provide two of the strands of the argument for abolition. The London *Standard* provided a third. On the day of the debate it published a photograph of the bruises on a 13-year-old pupil who was caned for doing badly in a school examination. Even the supporters of corporal punishment admitted in the debate that this was going too far; but they could not deny that it happened and that, as long as violence is permitted, excesses are likely.

Last week's debate took place after the House of Lords had voted to ban violence in schools. What MPs had to decide was whether to accept the Lords' vote or to overturn it. The government allowed Conservatives a free vote; Labour had a three-line, er, whip on its MPs to vote against violence.

The circumstances of the debate made it one of those rare occasions in a Parliament in which the government has a massive majority: a real chance for MPs to defy ministers and give effect to a libertarian advance. Almost every other three-line whip imposed by Labour during the past three years has been an empty gesture, designed to persuade MPs to stand up — or, more precisely, walk through — and be counted on an issue where there is no chance of winning.

This time victory would be possible. For once, every vote would count; and as the majority at the end was only one, every vote did. All the stranger, then, that some of Labour's leading figures were absent. Roy Hattersley failed to make the division lobbies. So did Denis Healey. James Callaghan wasn't there. Nor was John Smith. Maybe all four had perfectly good reasons to stay away. Maybe not. But two other absences ought to raise some eyebrows, for they can be explained, if not justified: Tony Benn and Eric Heffer.

ON TUESDAY evening last week some people were settling down in the Mall to have a good view the of next day's wedding procession. Others were checking that their morning suits were ready for the service in

PETER KELLNER

Westminster Abbey. Others were watching Andrew and Sarah's TV interview.

I can disclose that Mr Benn and Mr Heffer were doing none of these things. They were at Hampstead Town Hall, launching a new left-wing umbrella organisation called Labour Left Liaison. Other left-wing MPs stayed for most of the meeting, but still reached Westminster in time for the 10 pm vote. Benn and Heffer decided that the cause of justice and freedom would be better served if they stayed in Hampstead.

A candid case for that decision would go something like this:

'Between you, me and half a dozen Trot weeklies, the Left is in dreadful shape. The loose coalition that secured those changes in Labour's constitution in 1980 and at the beginning of 1981 has disintegrated. It first fractured when Benn stood for the deputy leadership five years ago. Thirty-seven MPs who had previously been identified with the Left abstained, giving Healey his victory. That abstention was led by Neil Kinnock — and look where he is now.'

'In 1983 Heffer was trounced in the leadership vote. In the deputy leadership contest, Michael Meacher lost to Roy Hattersley in *every* properly held union ballot *and*, to our astonishment, in the constituency section of the electoral college.

'Since then the Left has lost seats on the National Executive, been outvoted in every conference decision that matters and outmanoeuvred in the Parliamentary Labour Party. In the old days, the Tribune Group achieved some degree of left-wing cohesion at Westminster. Now the Left is divided between the Campaign and Tribune Groups and this year it cannot even agree on a common Shadow Cabinet slate.

'One result of that, incidentally, is that this autumn those MPs who are members of both groups will have to climb off the fence. Campaign Group MPs have agreed to show their colleagues their shadow cabinet ballot papers, to demonstrate that they have not deviated from the inner-party line. If people like Michael Meacher, Stuart Holland and Clare Short do vote publicly for the Campaign slate, it is hard to see how they can also remain members of the Tribune Group.

'Anyway, back to the real issue. The Left has been doing badly in all the conventional party forums. It has been coming apart outside them, too. Militant has been a growing embarrassment and it became clear that any new left umbrella organisation must exclude Hatton and his friends.

'So the Left set up Labour Left Co-ordination as a non-Militant far-left vehicle for fighting Neil Kinnock. It didn't work. Two of the groups, Socialist Organiser and Labour Briefing, succeeded in dominating LLC by manipulating the appointment of delegates from a number of LLC's affiliates. This angered others in the LLC, notably the Women's Action Committee and the black sections, who feared the LLC would become just another white, male, sectarian ramp.

'Labour Left Liaison has grown from the ashes of LLC and is an attempt to avoid its mistakes. LLL is led by the women's and black organisations, which alternate in providing chairpersons for LLL meetings. To avoid the dangers of rigged meetings, majority voting has been abolished. LLL decisions require a consensus: each group has a veto.

'The reason why Benn and Heffer stayed in Hampstead was to make sure that LLL's first meeting was a success. They believe that Kinnock has betrayed the true faith of socialism and that everything possible must be done to keep the ark of the covenant ship-shape for the day Kinnock's treachery is revealed for all to see. Nothing could be more important just now for any self-respecting left-winger than to keep the flame of true socialism burning.'

I DOUBT whether Mr Benn or Mr Heffer would express themselves in quite that way, but that's the broad thrust of what they are up to. It makes sense for anyone who believes more immediate political projects are so doomed to failure that it is not worth the effort to try to help them succeed.

What happened on Tuesday of last week cannot be explained in any other way. Tony Benn and Eric Heffer, both senior Labour parliamentarians, had a rare chance to vote for liberty on the ground. Instead they chose to remain in Hampstead, painting fantasies in the sky. □

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UK'S LISTENING LINK WITH APARTHEID

Compelling evidence of a 'disgraceful' new intelligence link between Britain and the South African government has just been published in the United States. DUNCAN CAMPBELL, with PATRICK FORBES, explains how the new evidence exposes a British betrayal of the front-line African states and reveals active intervention — on the side of apartheid

SINCE 1981, the British signals intelligence agency, GCHQ, has co-ordinated and assisted South African intelligence monitoring and targeting of the 'front-line' African states and the African National Congress. In a major report, last week's *New York Times* disclosed that British, American and South African intelligence officials visited GCHQ Cheltenham in the mid-1980s to co-ordinate their electronic monitoring operations.

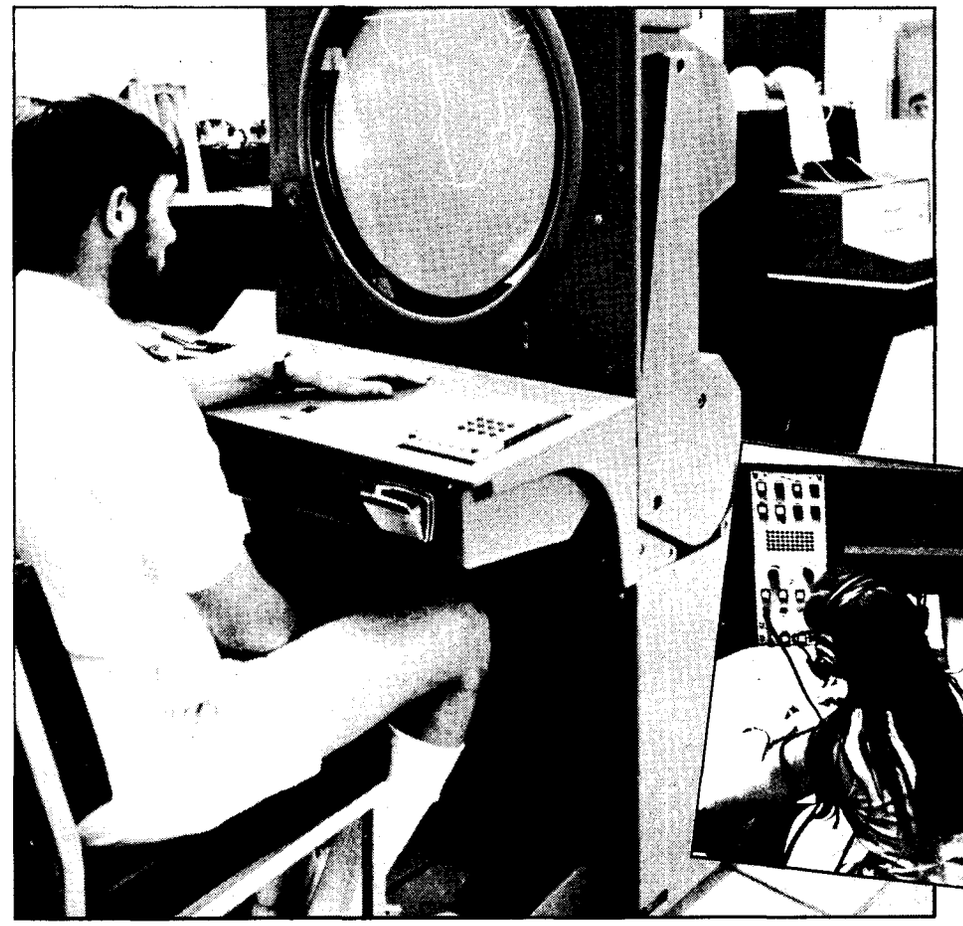
The secret arrangements for collaboration between Western intelligence agencies give responsibility for Africa to GCHQ. Specifically, under the 1947 British-American 'UKUSA' pact on signals intelligence, GCHQ is the 'tasking authority' for all electronic monitoring in Africa, as well as the Middle East and Europe up to the Ural mountains. This continuing arrangement requires the explicit political authority of the Prime Minister of the day.

Britain also provides most of the listening posts in the area and is currently operating clandestine 'Sigint' stations in Zambia, Swaziland and Malawi — and possibly also in Botswana. The Zambian station can intercept communications to and from the ANC headquarters in Lusaka, in conjunction with South African stations in Namibia. British stations in Swaziland and Malawi are well positioned to intercept signals in Angola. Communications with Mozambique, where the ANC has training bases, are covered from a listening post on Ascension Island.

We have put the *New York Times* allegations to former and serving GCHQ and intelligence officials. None denies the story and some have provided substantial background information about British monitoring in Africa.

The US report was largely based on information from three past and present intelligence officials in the Reagan administration. In particular, a former member of the US National Security Agency (NSA), GCHQ's much larger counterpart in the United States, told reporter Sy Hersh in convincing detail how three countries' Sigint agencies had met in Cheltenham in the mid 1980s, for a 'tasking' conference.

The Foreign Office refused this week to comment on the US report, despite the clear extra embarrassment it must have caused to Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe's 'mission' to Southern Africa. But Denis Healey, the shadow foreign secretary, described the collaboration as simply 'disgraceful'.



Inside the underground maritime and communications surveillance centre at Silvermine, near Cape Town. (Above): the watch on shipping; (Inset): the interception of communications

UNTIL THE 1974 LABOUR government abrogated the Simonstown Agreements, which gave the Royal Navy base rights at Simonstown near Cape Town, GCHQ staff were openly posted to South Africa. During the early 1970s, British military and intelligence officials were accommodated at the South African communications centre at Silvermine, near Cape Town.

The *New York Times* says that liaison staff from NSA also worked at Silvermine. But collaborative monitoring arrangements at that time were limited to strategic surveillance of the Cape sea route, particularly the movements of Soviet bloc and Chinese shipping and submarines. They did not include the 'targeting' of the liberation movements, or of Angola, Mozambique, or Zimbabwe, all of which were then under colonial or white rule. Reports from Silvermine were sent first to Cheltenham and then on the NSA headquarters in Maryland.

The presence of GCHQ staff in South Africa is confirmed by a 1970 report in *The Monitor*, the magazine of the Association of Government Supervisors and Radio Operators, which formerly represented GCHQ radio monitoring staff. The report details revised subsistence allowances at overseas stations, including a new rate for South Africa, agreed by GCHQ in June 1969.

After the Simonstown Agreements were put under review in 1974, South Africa itself was a major GCHQ target. A senior GCHQ analyst who saw top secret signals intelligence on South African security operations told the *New Statesman* this week that it was of high quality and was assessed to be an accurate

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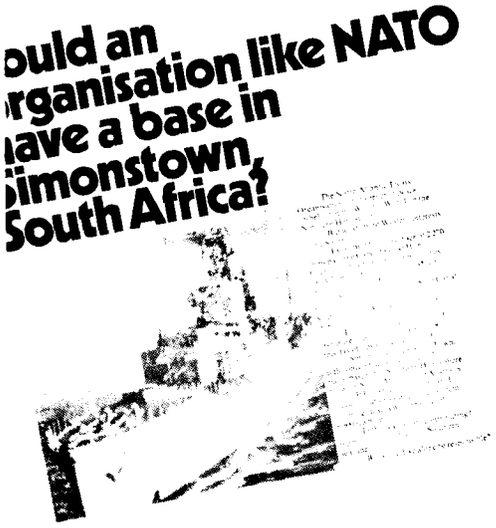
source of information on the course of the liberation struggles of the 1970s. But GCHQ intelligence reports were deliberately distorted before they reached Labour Cabinet, the African specialist alleged this week.

GCHQ intercepted reports of regular tripartite security meetings between the DGS (the Portuguese security police), Rhodesian intelligence officials and Colonel (later General) van der Bergh, the head of the South African Bureau of State Security (BOSS). Because DGS accurately reported Portuguese losses, GCHQ gained valuable information. But back in Whitehall, GCHQ's intercepts about Frelimo gaining the upper hand were



In a desperate attempt to establish links with NATO countries, the South African government advertised the capabilities of its intelligence systems in western newspapers in the mid 1970s

not believed. 'It was only when we had reports of them [guerrillas] operating in every district that they [the Joint Intelligence Committee staff] had to admit that they had the upper hand.'

GCHQ also targeted South African military communications during their intervention in Angola in 1976. It wasn't difficult to crack South African codes:

> It was pretty simple stuff, they all relied on hand ciphers, if they used any ciphers at all. We had a pretty clear picture.

These reports are confirmed by a leaked Australian report we have obtained. The 1974 annual review by Australia's Director of Joint Intelligence Organisation, marked TOP SECRET UMBRA, says that western Sigint information was of particular value in reporting on 'armed incidents between liberation movements and security forces in South Africa . . . Sigint made a substantial contribution to our total information.'

There is no evidence that GCHQ once again began to collaborate actively with South Africa before 1979. GCHQ sources say that any formal link of the type described would be difficult to conceal.

After Britain withdrew from Simonstown in 1975, the South African Department of Information surprisingly took to advertising its new intelligence system as a bait for closer links with NATO. An advertisement in *The Times*, asked whether an organisation like NATO have a base in Simonstown, South Africa. Simonstown, it said:

> has a highly sophisticated communications surveillance system covering an area with a radius of 5000 sea miles . . . In this way we are contributing to the protection of the vital Southern sea lanes. But should we alone be responsible?

The 1974-79 Labour government did, however, repeatedly license the supply of communications equipment for the South African surveillance and communications system, known as Project ADVOKAAT. The *New York Times* report alleged that during the 1970s, quantities of electronic equipment, 'were secretly shipped from Britain and West Germany . . . to enable the South Africans to build more listening sites'.

There is strong evidence that this is true, though most of the South African surveillance equipment seems to have come from West Germany. But Marconi did supply a long range 'troposcatter' communications system for use in Namibia, vital in setting up distant listening stations. James Callaghan also permitted the sale of a high security message switching system, which he said could be 'legitimately exported to South Africa'.

BUT THE SCENE had changed by the early 1980s, and GCHQ staff in southern Africa were again professionally involved with South Africans. This would have been part of the process leading up to the meeting at Cheltenham, described by the *New York Times* source. In his presence, GCHQ officials swapped details of current and desired future 'tasking' with the South Africans.

The meeting was called as part of a wider review of Sigint operations in sub-Saharan Africa and was part of the normal NSA-GCHQ liaison arrangements. Each network to be monitored or target to be covered is broken down as a specific 'task', and allocated with an appropriate degree of priority to one or more monitoring stations. The South Africans handed over a priority list which included:

- political, military and diplomatic intelligence about Zambia, Botswana, Tanzania, Angola and Mozambique. The South Africans provided GCHQ with their information about radio frequencies used by these countries and asked GCHQ and NSA to cover any 'items of interest to South Africa'
- any and all tasking related to the ANC's Oliver Tambo and ten named members of his ANC high command staff.

Tambo and the others would be put on GCHQ and NSA's 'watch list', which is used to programme computers which scan all international communications, other than telephone calls.

Millions of messages are annually sifted automatically for information on the 'watch list' targets. This type of interception produces good information about travel and business arrangements. The South Africans asked GCHQ and NSA to report on any flights that Tambo took aroad Soviet and Cuban airlines. Such information could have been used either in an assassination attempt, or to support propaganda aimed at representing the ANC as Soviet-supported puppets.

The South Africans also wanted GCHQ and NSA to give 'special emphasis' in Sigint requirements to ANC communications. This gave the NSA observer the clear impression that the South Africans badly wanted assistance. 'It was clear [that the South Africans] were unable to independently intercept all of the communications [of the ANC] they deemed essential.

The ANC's communications network is centred on Lusaka, Zambia, where GCHQ operates a covert monitoring station inside the British High Commission, according to two GCHQ staff. There are ANC links to training camps in Angola and to the movement's 30 or so international offices, including one at the United Nations.

It is clear from the *New York Times* story that the South Africans were already using standard Sigint designation systems, called 'case notation', to identify networks and cypher systems which they were covering or wanted covering. Every network is given a code, indicating the country of origin, the use of the system, and the cyphers in use (if any).

The use of 'case notation' implies that co-ordination has been under way for some time. Other officials said that the South Africans had been receiving political intelligence as well as advance warning of ANC operations'.

In return, GCHQ and NSA representatives at the meeting asked the South Africans for:

- continued monitoring of Soviet and Cuban activity in Angola and Mozambique;
- weekly reports on Soviet submarine and shipping activity around the Cape of Good Hope;
- reports on Soviet commercial and economic activity in sub-Saharan Africa, with special emphasis on support for rebel activity.

Such a tasking conference would be held under the aegis of one of the five GCHQ subdivisions which monitor the world outside the Soviet Bloc. All are part of K Division, responsible for 'General Sigint'. GCHQ's section K25 is in charge of monitoring the communications of sub-Saharan Africa, while section K11 co-ordinates the detailed monitoring and tasking of the intercept stations. K25's targets include all the former British, French and Portuguese colonies of southern Africa.

British Sigint on southern Africa now comes primarily from the chain of small monitoring stations inside the target countries themselves. We have confirmed from GCHQ sources that during the 1980s such listening posts have been in operation inside the British High Commissions at Lusaka, Zambia; Blantyre, Malawi; Gabarone, Botswana; and Mbabane, Swaziland.

But not all K Division's intercept stations are in Africa. A GCHQ listening station in Hammersmith, west London, intercepts communications of African and other Third World embassies in and out of London, from the commanding heights of the 24th floor of the Empress State Building. In contrast, the American NSA has never had major monitoring facilities in southern Africa and has relied on GCHQ and visits by spy ships.

But it is now clear, given the deafening silence from Whitehall and Cheltenham about the *New York Times* allegations, that Britain has been caught out. GCHQ's chain of secret African listening stations have been turned round not only to spy on their Commonwealth hosts, but to use the host territory to aid and comfort the Botha regime.

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PRIORITIES: THE KEY TO CHANGE

Are you an expert? Have you the time to attend long meetings in the Westminster area? Then you're probably on one of the Labour Party's subcommittees and working parties that is turning out so many 'Policies'. But which shall we put into practice first? asks JOHN GARRETT

LABOUR'S network of policy committees have an academic bias, are heavy on theory, rather light on practical experience (outside local government) and very light on experience of management.

They therefore tend to be over-ambitious and not fully aware of the practical difficulties of implementing the proposals they put forward. This problem was formidably illustrated by some of the policies which found their way into Labour's 1983 manifesto: particularly its policies for industry and economic planning ('Novel Plans', *NS* 29 March 1985).

Labour's National Executive also appears to have had a poorly developed mechanism for deciding on priorities between policy areas so that it usually supports much of what is proposed in each area without ever considering if all the proposals could be implemented in the lifetime of a government or what their priority order and relationships should be.

Ordering is needed to take into account not only the costs of policies and the timing of costs, but the constraints of the parliamentary timetable and to evaluate the combined impact of proposed policies on the machinery of government. It would be useful if in the next year or so the party HQ promoted a debate in constituencies on what the priorities of a Labour government should be. In that way, the queue of legislation could be put in priority order and many of the policies and proposals which do not involve much, if any, cost or legislation could be slotted in as well.

The policy subcommittees are usually keen on reorganising government departments, creating new agencies and quangos and restructuring everything in sight. It looks as if the Environment Department will be simultaneously responsible, under Labour, both for sponsoring a gigantic public works programme (quite right, too) *and* a wholesale reconstruction of local government.

The second is particularly alarming, since it appears to involve elected regional assemblies, the abolition of shire counties and the establishment of all-purpose districts, mainly at the behest of Labour-controlled councils.

Leaving aside the time required to carry out such a programme (10 years?), its spectacular costs and the unpopularity of abolishing the shires, nobody seems to have given much thought to the fate of voters in permanently Tory-controlled regions and districts, particularly if the regions are given responsibility for economic development. An elected regional assembly for East Anglia, for example, would doubtless consider that the best form of economic development for the region would be to turn the landscape from Cambridge to Cromer into one treeless priarie. Better by far, I would have thought, to focus the devolution of powers on the former county boroughs as was promoted some years ago as 'organic change'; put economic development in the hands of government-controlled Development Agencies and leave the rest alone, except, of course, for enforcing stringent standards of service provision.

In this policy area, as in others, it seems to me that the less reorganisation the better. My experience of trying to reorganise large institutions is that in general one shouldn't do it unless the existing structure is demonstrably obstructing its own objectives (which is actually not often the case).

This view appears to have gained ground in industrial policy where the only new agency now proposed is the National Investment Bank, though I notice that elaborate planning systems are again beginning to spread like fungus and the risk is re-emerging of delivery being swamped by procedure.

THERE'S STILL an idea about that a re-vamped Department of Industry should take over the public spending planning functions of the Treasury (recent comments by Michael Heseltine appear to point in the same direction). It seems to me to be pure folly to lumber a department already charged with the massive task of re-industrialising Britain with the annual round of bilateral arguments with all the other spending departments. Better by far to get a grip on the Treasury's planning and control functions so that they become a much more rational and systematic means of prioritising spending.

What Labour needs to do is to put more weight behind the annual Public Expenditure Survey system and empower the Chief Secretary of the Treasury to apply iron rules to departmental bids for funds. Every project submitted to the Chief Secretary should be accompanied by a statement of its objectives in relation to party policy, preferably quantified; its effect on employment, public enterprise, trade and investment; its effect on regions; its implications for ethnic groups and for women and its impact on social disadvantage.

Inadequately justified bids should not receive funding and support should be given to those programmes which most benefit target groups and regions. Compliance by departments should be monitored by a Central Policy Review Staff reporting to the Chief Secretary. The former Central Policy Review Staff (the Think Tank) produced some valuable cross-departmental studies but was ignored by departments because it had no connection with their funding. A programme staff of this kind would carry real weight with departments. To paraphrase the late President Johnson, if you grab them by the wallet, their hearts and minds will surely follow.

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and expensive new procedures since, luckily, the present government has laid the foundation for it by spending a lot of money on its Financial Management Initiative. The Initiative is derived from the work of the Fulton Committee of 20 years ago, updated by Lord Rayner's efficiency scrutinies and Heseltine's managerial approach at the Environment Department. It aimed initially at costing all the activities of departments and trying to delegate more responsbility for internal costs to individual civil service managers. It is now moving on to apply more rigorous analysis to spending programmes by establishing their objectives and measuring their results.

Its aims are to achieve better 'control' and 'value for money'. A Labour definition of these aims would be very different from the present one but imposing a socialist perspective on the system would not be difficult to achieve.

Labour should be very interested in the effectiveness and the impact, as well as the efficiency, of public spending. For example, a system which established the benefits to women in every spending programme would be far more effective an intervention in a department's policies than a Minister for Women with no tanks (whatever the recognition value there may be in appointing such a minister) particularly if the Chief Secretary were to make clear she — the Chief Secretary — had the support of the Cabinet.

These ideas are, of course, open to the criticism that they centralise power rather than dispersing it. So they do: in a country with a terrible shortage of planning, managerial and analytical skills the place to put them is at the centre. Just like any other underdeveloped country.

John Garrett is a management consultant who was Labour MP for Norwich South 1974-83.

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

BRING OUT YOUR OAPs

Just before the 'Closed for the Summer' signs went up on the Lords this weekend, a couple of offstage incidents illustrated the difficulties of keeping the country's oldest political repertory company on the road. ANDREW ROTH reports

THE FIRST CRISIS was the ambush laid by the 87-year-old former Master of the Rolls, Lord Denning. He built into the government's effort to privatise the royal dockyards at Devonport and Rosyth irremovable guarantees for their workforce, sufficient to delay their privatisation by at least six months.

UPP

Tories have over 400 supporters in the House of Lords. Even so, 'Bertie' Denham, their Chief Whip, sometimes gets ambushed for his troops aren't all that regular. From top left clockwise: Lord O'Hagan, Lord Dulverton, the Earl of Northesk and the Duke of Argyll

He knitted together a winning coalition of all the Cross Benchers (independents) plus the Opposition, particularly the Liberals, who had been held back by their Chief Whip Lord (Geoff) Tordoff to lull the Tories into early dinners. In the wake of this defeat, undoubtedly anticipating a handbagging by Mrs Thatcher, Viscount (Willie) Whitelaw bestrode the Princes' Chamber, hurling black looks and imprecations. By his side stood his whitefaced Chief Whip, Lord (Bertie) Denham.

The next week they overinsured, calling in the reserves to help ensure the end of guaranteed free school meals for children from families on supplementary benefit. Bertie Denham exploded when Michael Meacher attacked his mobilisation of 'backwoodsmen' to starve poor children. Bertie didn't realise that the dictionary definition of 'backwoodsmen' encompasses peers who vote infrequently.

Over a score of those against school meals for the poor had voted in fewer than eight of the 85 major divisions in this session. Lord O'Hagan, the wealthy MEP for Devon, cast his first vote this session, as did the Duke of Argyll. Millionaire tobacco heir Baron Dulverton cast his second vote of the session, as did the Earl of Northesk, an Isle of Man cattleraiser. Lords Elphinstone, Moyola and Noel-Buxton voted for the third time. The Duke of Atholl, a Cowdray millionaire, and the similarly endowed shipping and air tycoon Lord Cayzer, voted for the fourth time.

In the next-to-last week, the Tory Whips even exploited the Royal Wedding. Far-flung landed Tories, anxious to see Fergie and Andy spliced, were in London *en masse*. Some used their 25p a mile Lords travelling expenses and their £41 overnight hotel allowances to help finance attending both the Fergie and Andy show and keeping their party safe by voting to reverse government defeats. They secured the passage of the Social Security Bill by 213 votes to 143, with many, like Lords Audley, Bagot, Brocket, Byron, Camden, Dacre, Donoughmore, Falmouth, Freyberg, Hawke and Limerick, voting for the very first time.

THE TORIES have over 400 supporters in the Lords but almost never have required more than a third of them to turn up. To turn out over half their potential vote produced astonished protests from their opponents.

That the Tories felt they had to field 50 more votes than their previous normal high this session underlines the Lords' capricious and unpredictable nature. The Lords are like an elderly, largely unpaid, repertory company with nobody, not even the government's stage managers, knowing fully who is going to turn up on the night. Otherwise, the government would not be defeated there regularly, between 10 and 20 times a year.

Of course, the nature of the play often determines much of the speaking (if not the voting) cast. Labour's Lord Wedderburn, LSE law professor, is almost certain to be on hand to defend workers' legal rights, if not at other times. The 3rd Baron Hacking, as much at home in Wall Street as in the City, is almost sure to attend commercial law debates, such as this week's on the Financial Services Bill.

Despite such specialised attendances, keeping the ageing rep. company on the road is carried mainly by the long retired. It is particularly burdensome to those who put in long hours of homework on the front bench, without research assistance. The burden was illustrated by the recent death within days of each other, of 69-year-old SDPer Lord Crawshaw of Aintree as well as aged Tory and Labour Lords (Bob) Boothby and (Joe) Stone, Harold Wilson's old GP. This was the loss of a fifth of an average year's elevation of life peers, still outnumbered over two-to-one by hereditaries.

The question of age particularly afflicts the Opposition, because all but a tiny minority arrive after their retirement from the Commons or elsewhere. Labour Whips normally can only milk their new acquisitions for a few years before the illnesses of age deactivate them. Over the past 20 years Labour leaders in the Lords have privately complained bitterly about the lack of interest of Commons Labour leaders in replenishing their depleted ranks, even when Labour was in No 10. It has been particularly difficult since Mrs Thatcher has been there. Even when Labour ranks have been thinnest, she has insisted on elevating a larger number of Tories in parallel. She has even tried to decide on Labour's nominees. She objected, but Michael Foot insisted in 1983 on raising defeated MPs able David Stoddart and Joe Dean, because they were in their 50s, without jobs and could become fulltime Lords. Mrs Thatcher showed the oldstyle Labour peers she wanted by promoting Lords (Fred) Mulley and (Arthur) Bottomley. On top of that, to needle Neil Kinnock, she elevated two Left-bashers who don't take the Labour whips: (Frank) Chapple and (Bob) Mellish.

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MEDIA

Channel 4 retreats into 'balance'

JOHN ELLIS

A YEAR after the banning of Real Lives — which provoked a one-day strike by broadcast journalists — censorship of current affairs TV is back in its usual mode. There's nothing much that can concretely be pointed to because it takes place during or even before production, quietly within the bureaucracies of broadcasting. Broadcasters tend, for their own sanity, to take these interventions as part of the conditions of their job: as a kind of gentle drizzle that you'd rather do without, but doesn't seem to amount to much. But at Channel 4, the drizzle has turned into a downpour.

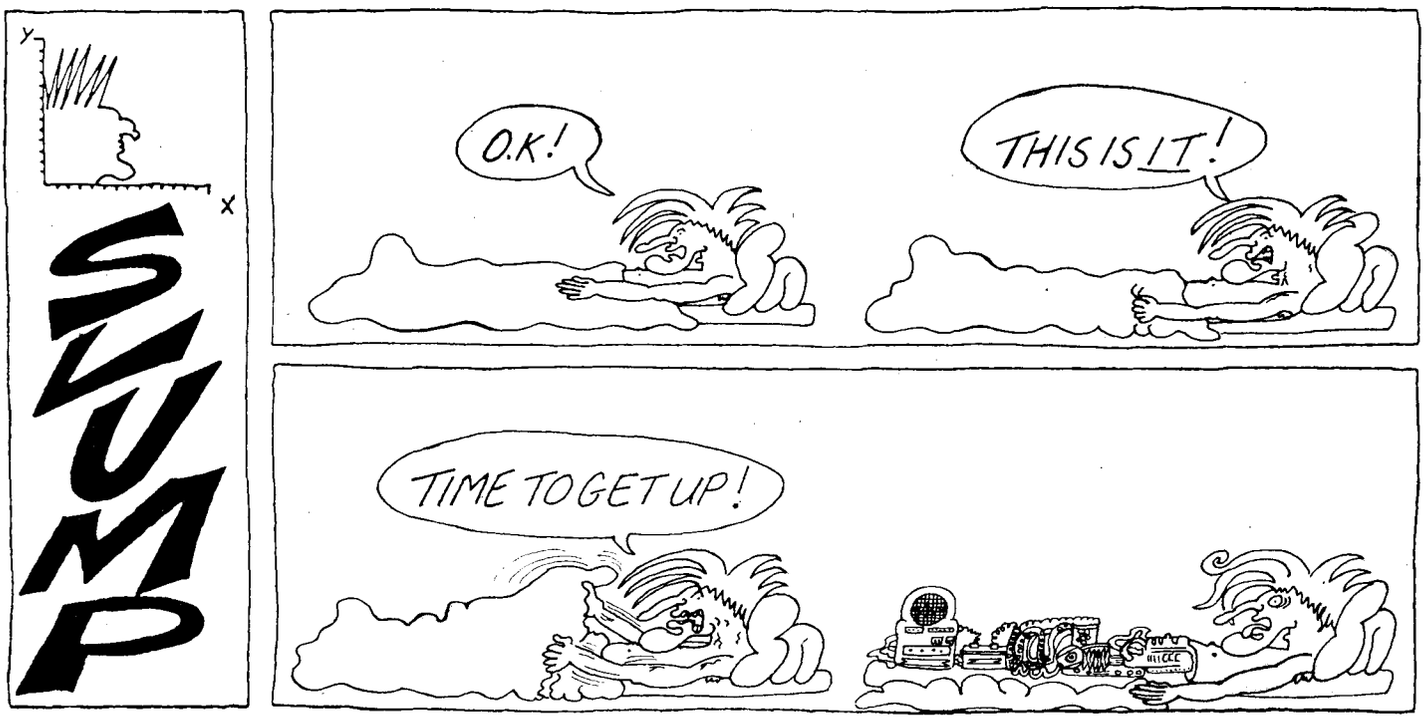
Interventions into programme content and into the basic conceptions of productions have multiplied in recent months. The dreaded term 'balance' has returned into the everyday parlance of Channel 4 bureaucrats, instead of being relegated to the usefully imprecise idea of 'balance across the whole of the output', or, more acutely, 'balancing what the other channels get up to'. In the early days of Channel 4, these ideas were deployed to justify some marvellously opinionated programmes, and a general move away from the need to show all points of view at once. The opinionated programming still exists — *People to People, The Bandung File* or, sometimes *The Eleventh Hour*. Sometimes documentaries escape from these corrals of dissident opinion and parade themselves as part of general programming.

One such was *May The Force Be With You*, arguing for a publicly accountable police force. Those newspapers and magazines that care have already explored this question a number of times without the world ending. But on TV, it seems, it's different. The programme did get transmitted last Wednesday, after a tussle with the IBA; but a 'balancing' programme has been commissioned to put the police view more sympathetically. It was commissioned, significantly, *before* the IBA had made any fuss about *May The Force Be With You*. A couple of years ago, Channel 4 would have argued the case with the IBA on the grounds that the general bias of TV current affairs was sympathetic to the police, and that the original programme was merely balancing that tendency. The IBA might have insisted on the making of a second 'balancing' programme or a discussion after the original one. But no programme would have been commissioned on Channel 4's initiative to balance another programme.

Other balancing programmes for other series are in the making as well: there will be an extra discussion show tagged on to the end of the variable *Commodities* series currently on Monday nights so that you can discover that commodity trading is not, after all, bad for your health.

Other interventions of a different kind are also taking place: the phone lines buzz with rumours and (necessarily off-the-record) stories of changes demanded in the basic conception of projects so that the perils of opinionated TV can be avoided. And there is one common factor in all of these stories: the figure of Liz Forgan, recently promoted to Assistant Controller from her former job as senior commissioning editor for Current Affairs. Since her elevation, she has taken a detailed interest in the more opinionated areas of the Channel's output, although it's doubtful if her interventions are of her own volition. It's surprising to find a former *Guardian* Women's Page editor cutting some seconds out of *Brookside* because of its too-graphic portrayal of Sheila Grant's emotions after being raped. Here, at least, balance was not the issue. However, the actual cut, and, more seriously, the reported argument about the whole plot strand, betray a new concern that this soap opera's repeated and uncompromising raising of major social issues should not 'go too far'. In particular, Liz Forgan's concern seems to chime with some viewers' that the rape plot strand should not have come in the same group of episodes as a nasty piece of wife (or, more accurately, co-habitee) battering. *Brookside* was raising several aspects of violence against women all at once: surely a useful thing to do even if the soap opera format can provide no real structural analysis of why these things happen (though characters can).

Why is Liz Forgan making a large number of interventions into Channel 4 programmes at a time when the Channel seems to be under no particular outside pressure? There can be only one reason. Channel 4 is fed up with the frequent run-ins it has had with the IBA who demand this or that cut, this or that change. Senior management have decided to pre-empt the IBA as much as possible. This is the wrong way to go about keeping broadcasting open. To anticipate possible censorship moves is always to over-censor yourself. This is the role that BBC employees are asked to perform in return for their secure salaries. But those people who left the BBC and elsewhere to set up as independent producers making opinionated programmes have made no such pact. □



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DIARY

Geoff Dyer

Brixton

The week seemed to arrange itself with the express intention of getting into this diary — like the raids on Thursday. You could tell something was happening by the way everybody was asking everybody else what was happening. I was in a DIY shop at the time, wishing I measured things more accurately. Next thing all the stock from outside was bundled in and the shutters yanked down. Predicting riots is a full-time activity round here — it's done like farmers forecasting the weather, but with less accuracy. Railton Road had been blocked off and there were police everywhere. Everyone else just milled around while the rush hour traffic swelled up. Nobody was getting through the road blocks so I trudged back to my cave, 65 foot (approximately) of shelving digging into my collar-bone. From the roof of where I live you get a good view of the area but everything was quiet, except for Concorde booming modernly overhead.

○

That evening in the Albert — a pub on Coldharbour Lane, packed with trendies, all complaining about it being trendy and packed — the news goes round about the raids on Railton Road and the arrests. Someone says they saw the police arriving by train like football hooligans. You wonder what they'll get up to next. Disguise themselves as bus conductors and come down on the 2B?

There are still lots of people around, but apart from an air of expectant uncertainty everything seems normal. In the Atlantic further down the road there is some jazz playing that exactly catches the mood outside. Perhaps that's what it is that gives sax and trumpet their expressive vitality: the players *literally* breathe in the atmosphere and throw it out again at greater intensity. The trumpet in the Atlantic is edgy and cool. Outside it's warm but not stifling. No trouble.

○

Walking back through streets that are bustling with activity during the day it strikes me that maybe the whole idea of street life in this country came into existence at the same moment when, it was claimed, the streets became unsafe to walk in, when crime began destroying a way of life that had never actually existed. A new sense of community was ushered in by a lament for a vanishing past that had never been. (A part of post-modernity: simultaneous emergence of a concept and its negation.) Brixton is on the frontier of a new kind of society, much of it better than what has been displaced.

○

In order to delay a meeting in my flat that I don't want to take place, I go the long way round, past the Fridge, the big nightclub by the town hall. To me it seems an incredible place, the exact antithesis of a good time: massive, dark, thumping disco, beer that tastes like lager. If, in the 1920s, an expressionist film had been made of people enjoying themselves like this, it would have seemed like a vision of the future as hell. The really incredible thing is that if you saw such a film today (in black and white, with poor sound) it would still seem like that; the metropolis as Golgotha.

There's a hint of the same thing at the swimming pool in Brixton Recreation Centre. On hot days we pack in there like ducks. It's like a liquid tube train. Doing a stunted form of breast stroke you look down and expect to see another layer of less fortunate people swimming underneath, chocolate box style.

○

Back to my flat for that meeting I wanted to avoid. Every night this week there have been two of us in my bed: me and my insomnia. However late I show up it's still hanging around. What misery! I could write pages on it if I wasn't so tired. I thrash around like a shark, worrying, worrying about not sleeping, worrying about oversleeping. I slither into a light sleep at about four and slither out of it at eight. During the day my eyes feel like they're full of hot grit and all I want to do is snooze. By the evening I'm shattered and go to bed early; by 2 a.m. I'm wide awake. And sleeping used to be something I was so good at. At university I only used to get tired enough to go back to bed again; now I only go to bed to get restless

enough to get up again. The only night I slept well this week was Friday, after I'd been mugged.

○

Look, it's true. I know it sounds like a parody of life here, but the truth is that on Friday, for the first time in five years, I got rolled. In what might be called an odd state of mind anyway, I didn't even know it was happening. With a friend, I had just come through the entry door of my block. Somebody else followed us in and said something I couldn't understand — I thought he was asking for directions. Then several things made it all clear. First, I realised he had a scarf up round his face, Jesse James style; second, I worked out what he was whispering — the scarf had been muffling his voice — 'what you got, cunt?'; third, my friend scuttled up the stairs in terror; fourth (the clincher), two accomplices had shouldered their way in and one of them was holding a rusty stanley knife inches from my face. The next bit did not go very smoothly. My pockets were full of junk they didn't want: cassette tapes, glasses case, *The Human Province* by Elias Canetti, empty crisp packets. They grabbed what they wanted and scrambled out the door; three kids about sixteen, all looking like they were shitting themselves. Mugging is hardly even the right word for it; begging by force would be more accurate. An intense exchange of gestures between comparative strangers, it was closer to a charade than an assault. The alarming thing is realising the rapidity with which, in situations like that, consequences become determining.

○

The only real loss was textual. They grabbed a fiver in an envelope on which I'd scribbled notes for this diary. Somewhere I'd jotted down, superfluously as it turns out, a motto for inner city health: swim if you can, run when you need to.

ROGER WODDIS

Chingford terror strikes again

'Some people find life in the safety net a little too comfortable. They don't attempt to climb the ladder.' — Norman Tebbit, Tory Party chairman

We should be a little tougher
On the ones who hardly suffer
And complain because they lack a limousine.
With a ladder and some glasses
They could join the upper classes,
If it wasn't for the unions in between.

What was once called unemployment
They regard as pure enjoyment
And they render our supporters less than keen.
Given faith and resurrection,
We could win the next election,
If it wasn't for the workshy in between.

We applaud the chairman's talents,
But it's hard to strike a balance
When the credit-side is nowhere to be seen.
We could disregard the debit
And thank God for Norman Tebbit,
If it wasn't for the voters in between.

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Camera Press

Hassan: short-sighted, short-tempered and now short of US aid

MOROCCAN KING'S MYOPIC MOVE

King Hassan's overture to Israeli PM Peres was an impulsive stab at forcing more military aid from the US and the Saudis. It's backfired, reports CLAUDIA WRIGHT

Washington

KING HASSAN II of Morocco has his little ways. He requires a pair of spectacles (to correct myopia) beside every chair he is likely to sit upon, in every room of every one of the dozen palaces he inhabits in Morocco, not to mention his French chateau and New Jersey estate.

Whether from myopia or from wit isn't certain, but I have seen him use his foreign minister as an ashtray. For a 35th descendant of the Prophet Mohammed and heir to the 346-year old Alouite dynasty, time and tradition gloss over such indulgences. They are not enough, however, to endow Hassan's quirks with the global significance he ascribes to them himself.

The King's move to open public talks with the Prime Minister of Israel was conceived in a fit of royal pique; the aim was more to impress Israel's friends in Washington than to produce genuine negotiations between Israel and the Arabs. The result has been to impress no one and to drive the King to resigning from the 'Presidency' of the Arab League, an honorific title he had invented for himself.

The *NS* has learned from US and Arab sources that Hassan — who, like other Arab leaders, has met secretly with Israeli leaders in the past — issued his invitation to Prime Minister Shimon Peres in a sudden, impulsive decision a fortnight ago. He did not inform US officials — they were tipped off by the Israelis. Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East, Richard Murphy, said the US did not participate in planning the move and learned of it only 'a few days' before Peres flew to Morocco late on 21 July. US officials had already been embarrassed by the King's abrupt cancellation on 16 July of his visit to Washington, planned for the following week; they publicly denied the King had cancelled for the medical reasons the Moroccans had announced.

At first, the Americans were unwilling to say the King's talks with Peres would change the diplomatic stalemate over the occupied Palestinian territories. Subsequent support by the White House for the 'historical opportunity to further the cause of peace' was a rhetorical token of US backing that lacked conviction. The authorized leak that followed — that having learned from Peres that the King had issued his invitation, President Reagan tried to persuade the two of them to meet in Washington — expresses what a charade the so-called 'peace process' is on all sides.

THE FACT is that the Americans long ago decided to pursue by diplomatic means what they and the Israelis have failed to accomplish by land invasion, aerial bombing, and assassination attempts — the destruction of an independent Palestinian movement. In this strategy, the only negotiation they will countenance is an Israeli-Jordanian agreement that subordinates Palestinian self-determination to Jordanian sovereignty — and Jordanian administration of the *people* of the West Bank — to Israeli control of the land and water.

To the Americans, it has thus been more of a diplomatic obstacle than an achievement that between February 1985, when Yasser Arafat signed an accord with King Hussein of Jordan, and February 1986, when Hussein announced its collapse, the PLO leadership made substantial concessions on all the points the Americans, Israelis and Jordanians had demanded. Arafat had agreed to recognise and negotiate directly with Israel; he had accepted UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which exclude Palestinian self-determination and statehood, as the basis for negotiations with Israel; he had subordinated himself, the PLO and the Palestinians of the occupied territories to Jordanian representation and eventual Jordanian rule; he had repudiated the resort to violence

The fact that Arafat reserved what he has no power to repudiate — UN resolutions that provide for Palestinian self-determination in territory that was never legally Israel's or Jordan's to occupy, and the right of defence and resistance by Palestinians on that land — have been seized on by the Americans, Israelis and Jordanians as their justification for rejecting any further PLO involvement in the negotiating process. But nothing short of collective suicide by Arafat and the PLO leadership would really satisfy King Hussein.

Little wonder King Hassan's move has antagonised the Americans and Jordanians.

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Officials close to King Hussein express private anger at the Moroccan King's manoeuvre. According to the Jordanians, Hassan has never played a significant role in Arab League deliberations on the Palestine issue. His claims to speak for the League on the issue of Jerusalem and on Arab negotiations with Israel are exaggerated. The Jordanians believe King Hussein has been moving discreetly but effectively, with tacit support (they claim) from Syria and Saudi Arabia, toward a new Arab summit meeting to consider the negotiating options.

King Hussein accordingly views Hassan as playing the 'spoiler', undermining Jordan's tactic, antagonising Syria and reviving Arafat's waning support in the Arab League. US officials agree, but cannot say so in public to avoid tripping over their own rhetoric of commitment to 'comprehensive peace', 'Palestinian rights' and the benefits of Arab 'moderation'.

THE SAUDI KINGDOM is reluctant publicly to criticise an Arab monarch and, although Saudi King Fahd has long valued Hassan's advice, the Saudis are also believed to be privately furious at Hassan's tactic. This has been especially embarrassing for the Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah, who met Hassan just before the Peres visit began. The French press incorrectly reported that Abdullah was still in Morocco as Peres arrived; even though this was not so, the public impression Hassan has created is that the Saudi Kingdom endorsed his action when it did not.

The Saudis are the guarantors of Morocco's overdue international debts and pay most of the cost of Morocco's war to hold the territory of the Western Sahara. But recently the Saudis are reported to have been cutting back on their financial support — making it impossible for the King to acquire new aircraft and other weapons from the US, and unnerving Morocco's creditors in a period when demand for Morocco's principal export, phosphates, has collapsed.

There is speculation that Hassan may have intended his talks with Peres as a shock to the Saudis, to induce them to provide more money in order to keep Morocco from polarising the Arab League even further. Hassan may also have calculated that his only chance to acquire the billion-dollar package of US arms he wants — mainly F-16 aircraft and M-60 tanks — is to win the support of Israel's friends in Washington and to persuade them to increase US military grants to Morocco.

US officials had already advised Hassan that, although they were willing to approve such arms sales, there would be no increase in US funding to pay for them. That advice added to the King's pique. He apparently concluded the only way to change American minds was to get Israeli help.

A similar calculation by King Hussein of Jordan failed earlier this year. Hassan got his answer from Israel's friends in Congress rather sooner than expected. On 24 July the first Congressional sub-committee to vote on foreign aid for 1987 announced it would preserve Israel's economic and military aid in a gesture of support for Peres's 'new Middle East initiative', but would cut US assistance to Morocco in half. □

CONJURE UP DEMOCRACY

THE MAGIC NEW WORD

China's leaders are desperate for advice — but terrified of criticism, says JONATHAN MIRSKY

FROM CHINA, always something new; a vogue word or phrase. Rightists. Leftists. The Hundred Flowers. The Great Leap. The Cultural Revolution. Eating out of the Same Pot.

In Agriculture, Getting Rich is Glorious. Spiritual Pollution. The Rural Responsibility System. Socialism with Chinese Characteristics. Many of these slogans, programmes and movements are dead; those who uttered them are often dead as well, imprisoned, or discredited.

In China words are peculiarly potent, or as the party's *Red Flag* puts it; 'Speech may attach itself to certain kinds of conduct'. For centuries mandarins hung words, beautifully brushed, like 'sincerity,' 'loyalty,' or 'benevolence' on their walls. Peasants, took words just as seriously. Even today, they pay calligraphers for red strips of paper with gold characters, like 'prosperity' or 'fecundity', which they paste up on their doorways at New Year, in the hope that the words will turn into reality. In hungry villages, not long ago, the word 'full' was stuck on empty rice jars.

At the moment 'democracy' is very much in vogue. It is usually linked to 'reform of the political system'.

'Democracy' in China does not mean regular and genuine elections of officials, including the representative assemblies which legislate and oversee the police and the army, a free press, and, perhaps most important, the conviction that individuals have rights, often opposed to the State's, which must be protected by law. As Andrew Nathan points out in his recent *Chinese Democracy* (I.B. Tauris, 1986) what the party wants is a means of peacefully regulating conflict, giving legitimacy to government and gathering expert opinion. Above all 'democracy' implies that government and citizens should exist in harmony.

There are in China citizens who have called for western-style democracy. Most of them are now in jail or labour camps, after a brief appearance during the Democracy Movement of 1979-80. The most famous of these was Wei Jingsheng, now in the sixth year of his 15-year sentence, the author of the notorious 'Democracy, the Fifth Modernisation,' pasted up on Democracy Wall on 5 December 1978. Wei spoke of freedom of speech and assembly not as privileges handed down from above, but as legitimate individual powers. In March 1979 Wei accused Deng Xiaoping of 'metamorphising into a dictator.' A day or two later he was arrested.

With Wei behind bars, Deng, the man to whom many westerners look for a more 'pragmatic China,' declared that the sort of democracy called for at Democracy Wall, which he had closed down, was not going to appear in China. In a tough speech on 16 January, 1980, Deng attached the 'so-called democrats and dissidents . . . who actually want to oppose the Chinese Communist Party and socialism.' Soon thereafter he abolished 'the constitutionally guaranteed 'four big freedoms,' — of speech, assembly, debate, and poster-writing — on the grounds that they had been misused by Red Guards.

Like all Chinese leaders for 2,000 years, Deng's worst fear is of *luan*, of chaos. Only under party leadership and discipline can unity and stability be ensured. Without such discipline, he insisted in his January 1980 speech, the country would 'retrogress into divisions and confusion'.

Socialist Democracy, on the other hand, has been defined many times, usually in the party's People's Daily. 'It is a means, it must serve the socialist economic base and socialist production.' In the post-Mao economic reform, expertise, not ideological purity, is the foundation. Chinese democracy, therefore, means securing expert advice and support for modernisation.

BUT AFTER 30 years of purges, intellectuals must be persuaded that at last their advice is welcome. Seminars have been organised to encourage calls for democracy. At one of them an academic called for political reforms which would deconcentrate decison making, especially in matters 'quite beyond' the government. In China, he observed, until very recently governments intruded into fashion, hobbies, thought, joy — and even into grief.

But political reforms, the academic prudently emphasised, must be led from the centre. 'Reform is not a spontaneous mass movement and our reform cannot be successful if it deviates from the party's leadership.' A limited offer has been made by the party to the 'democratic parties,' those tiny, non-Communist groups which for 30 years have provided the facade of united front. These, too, are peopled by intellectuals whose help is needed in reaching Deng's target: a fully-modernized China within a century.

Exactly 30 years ago, during the Hundred Flowers, the party also asked for criticism. Intellectuals hesitated and then complied. What they said so alarmed Mao and his circle that a purge was ordered from which some victims were not rehabilitated for more than 20 years. But even in 1981 the party, while regretting the excesses of that purge, asserted that in 1957 'a handful of bourgeois rightists seized the opportunity to advocate what they called "speaking out and airing views in a big way" and to mount a wild attack against the party . . . It was therefore entirely correct to launch a resolute counter-attack.' The party general secretary in 1957 was Deng Xiaoping.

Freedom of speech, the freedom publicly to criticise the political system, remains the essence of what the party calls 'bourgeois democracy'. *Red Flag*, the official ideological journal, has warned that to escape sanctions all utterances must be free of anti-party anti-socialist views. Diaries are the exception. □

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LETTERS

20/20 hindsight

Cathy Massiter, E. Sussex

I would like to comment on the article by Duncan Campbell, 'Spy trial by television', which appeared in the *New Statesman* of 25 July 1986.

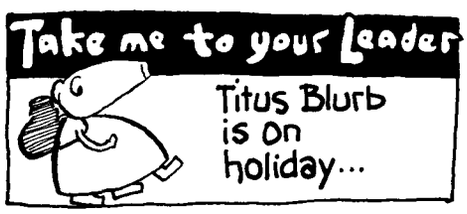
To start with, I have to point out that I am a prejudiced witness as I took part in the programme as a commentator on the authenticity of some of the information supplied by Derek Donaldson and Brian Gentleman. I became involved because the 20/20 Vision producers were very aware that information provided by a man of Donaldson's background had to be treated with great caution and checked out as far as possible. I was asked to comment on the details he gave about his dealings with both the Czech diplomat and the Security Service. I can only repeat now what I said then and tried to put across in the programme — that his story appeared coherent and, on the whole, convincing. If Donaldson was fabricating the whole story, then he was not only very well informed on intelligence matters but also in possession of details not commonly available to the general public regarding the Security Service.

As far as 20/20 Vision's dealings with Gentleman are concerned I know that the question of whether or not to confront him with the true nature of the programme was a matter of great concern to the producers throughout the making of the programme and was decided only in the final stages. Channel 4 were aware of and approved the decision.

I had previously worked with the 20/20 team on the programme 'MI5's Official Secrets' which was broadcast in March 1985. My experience of them is that they are people of integrity who do not undertake the production of a controversial programme without thorough research. Much of what I had to say in that earlier programme had to be taken on trust but it was, quite rightly, checked wherever possible.

In his article Mr Campbell makes play of the fact that Gentleman is not to be prosecuted under the Official Secrets Act since the evidence against him, including affidavits carrying his signature, is apparently regarded as 'unreliable'. Mr Campbell must be aware that I ws not prosecuted following the earlier 20/20 Vision programme. Instead an attempt was made to undermine my credibility by leaking the fact that I had been sent to see a psychiatrist during my final months with the Security Service and was therefore, by implication, 'unreliable'. If a case is likely to be difficult or embarrassing, the easiest way to get rid of it is to cast doubt upon the reliability of the source of the evidence. In the present instance the question of Gentleman's unreliability cuts more than one way. A 'lonely and weak personality' receiving intensive attention from a journalist may well 'pour out what they think their listeners want to hear'. The question surely arises whether such a person is to be considered less reliable when making statements incriminating himself than in his subsequent denial of those statements.

An article examining the pros and cons of the programme and looking at the evidence on all sides in a reasonably impartial manner would be useful and interesting. As Mr Campbell indicates, investigative journalism cannot be conducted on the simple assumption that the end always justifies the means. I was present two weeks ago at a long meeting between Mr Campbell and the 20/20 Vision producers at which they explained from their point of view the problems involved in making the programme and why they took the decision they did. I understand that he has since had a further long meeting with one of the producers, Claudia Milne. Their side of the story is hardly noticed in Mr Campbell's article except when it is presented in such a way as to cast immediate suspicion upon it.



Feminism's new paths

Sabina Lovibond, Worcester College, Oxford

It was a lapse of judgement for the *NS* to give such prominence to a highly subjective piece about the 'disappearance' of the women's liberation movement by a writer who admits to being 'no longer involved' in it, and to having retreated from involvement under the impression that 'it was women rather than men who were the problem for other women' (*NS* 25 July).

This piece, along with Liz Heron's, is announced with some fanfare on your cover. Apparently you did not see fit to extend the same recognition to Amrit Wilson's news report on a bit of feminist politics as practised by women who *are* currently active in the movement — the forthcoming rally against male violence in response to events around Brent Asian Women's Refuge.

It is not true that, as Rosalind Delmar claims, the 'grand design of appealing to all women has fallen away'. If anything has fallen away, it is the unexamined assumption that all women will automatically respond to the appeal of a politics created by white, middle-class, heterosexual women born around 1950. The diversification of feminism in recent years is the natural consequence of dismantling that assumption.

So Westland didn't matter?

Oliver Owen, Hove, Sussex

Your leading article on Westland implications (*NS* 25 July) seems to widen rather than narrow one of our contemporary explanation gaps. If, as you write, 'it . . . made very little . . . difference . . . which side won in the Westland battle', what on earth was all the fuss, effort and manoeuvre about?

Two Ministers out, senior civil servants 'in extremis', hazard to a PM's reputation, etc etc? Come on, *NS*, can you not beam a little more brightly?

Smokescreens

Ged Moran, Leeds

When powerful multinationals make their millions by peddling nuclear power, *NS* is quick to condemn the triumph of private greed over public health. When they do it by peddling tobacco, you print their full-page adverts in glorious technicolour (*NS* 25 July). Let's hope the new editor recognises a double standard when one kicks him in the lungs.

In the meantime, perhaps pitifully-resourced organisations such as ASH or TREES could put the money you made from the advert to good use. While you're at it, you could offer them an equivalent space to outline the carnage caused by smoking in language simple enough for even your business managers to understand.

Readers, we thank you . . .

Women's Review Co-Operative

The staff of *Women's Review* would like to thank all those *New Statesman* readers who sent in donations after Malcolm Imrie's reference to our Fighting Fund Appeal (*NS* 4 July). The August issue of *Women's Review* is now available. The Fighting Fund is still open.

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Clifford Harper

The sisters

Short story by Carol Lake

AHMED COMES. He comes beaming in in his red and gold leather slippers, looking as though he has just skimmed across the skies to get here. 'Did you want any errands?'

He pulls off his parka and establishes himself in a chair, and I go into the kitchen to make a drink. As I return we hear the letterbox crash. 'The door — there's someone at the door,' he says, excited at the idea of maybe a new person. But it's only the local free newspaper coming through. He seizes it, waves it about and drops again into the chair, reading. 'Look — it's one of those sisters.'

I peer across at the main picture. It's of an old lady, standing on a doorstep and shaking her fist, presumably at the photographer. 'Miss Hester Woodleigh in defiant mood' the caption underneath reads. 'Those sisters,' says Ahmed, 'I know about those sisters. I heard somebody in a shop say to this old lady, "Are you one of those sisters?" They won't move out of their house.'

It's true. The Council has been trying to get them out for years, but they just stay there. All around the streets have been razed, from one main road to another it looks like the Somme, but the sisters stay put.

'I can remember them from way back,' I say. 'They're twins, I think.'

'Twins?' repeats Ahmed unbelievingly. 'But twins are young.'

'Yes and after that they're old. I know, we'll make some fudge as a Christmas present and you can take it round to them.'

'Why should I take it?' he squeaks indignantly.

'Because you're small.'

This sounds as though I'm going to send him in through the larder window.

'I'll take it on one condition,' he stipulates, a big Cheshire-cat grin appearing. 'That I can have some of the fudge.'

'This kitchen looks a mess,' he says sternly as we move into it. 'When my mother cooks she always clears up straightaway.'

'If you've come to nag you can go straight back home again.'

He stands with a waiting spoon while I weigh sugar and margarine into a pan, and evaporated milk. '*Custard*. You never make custard now, Carol, when are you ever going to make it again. I liked it when you made that vanilla custard. *And* blancmange. After I got beat up that time. And my mum was making me soup every day,' he enthuses nostalgically. 'And my big uncle sent me a

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postal order.' He got beaten up last summer, when he was nine, by a gang of teenage boys. His face swelled out and one eye closed up and his lips went purple and swollen.

He puts the spoon down and sifts about in a drawer, pulling out a hand-mirror, regarding himself closely in it. 'Did I look everso horrible after I got beat up?'

'Absolutely horrible.'

He grins at me, then turns and scowls into the mirror, pulling a menacing face. '*I* want to stir it.'

I relinquish the spoon and he stirs about while I grease a tin and put it ready.

'My dad doesn't like sweet things, he can't stand them. It's with running the kebab house, he's used only to meaty things. And some old men, you know, standing on street corners, they say "Why should he give himself airs, he is only the shoemaker's son." '

'You pinched that out of a fairy-tale.'

Ahmed giggles. 'I know.' Then he turns serious. 'But he is the shoemaker's son.'

'Just a minute. Let me add some more milk.'

'In Pakistan I have my own cow. She's called Tchiji and she wears a bell. She knows my voice, she comes to me. I haven't seen her for a long time, not since I was four. I'll see her when we go back for a holiday. Next year, could be.' He says this every year.

'Will she still be there?'

'Yes,' he pipes, with heart-rending faith. 'She's mine.'

'Stir it in the middle or it will stick to the pan.'

'Carol, have you ever seen a dinosaur dropping?'

I don't think anybody has ever asked me this before.

'Our teacher's going to bring a plaster-cast of one to school.'

'Now that you mention it, we used to have them come round, a while back. About two hundred million years. I was small then. It was tropical round here. All up Rosehill Street was palm trees and there were no houses and lots of dinosaurs. And lots of sludge. Just hot sludge, going zu-uu-up zu-uu-u-up.'

'Zu-uu-up zu-uu-up,' he repeats. We gaze into the fudge. It's popping but it isn't going zu-uu-up zuu-uu-u-up.

'There's a well in Rosehill Street. The Council keep on at these people to fill it in but they're not going to. Wells can be very useful.' Then he chants, 'Out of the strong came forth sweetness,' reading the syrup tin. 'That's Samson, isn't it?'

'Is it? I don't know.'

'I think so. We did about Samson at Sunday school'.

'Oh yes? Which one was that?'

'The one on the corner with the brick flowers. I went there when I was seven, when I was friends with this boy.' Ahmed goes to mosque every week, but has been to most of the churches and Sunday schools round here. He likes to look around. The fudge boils over. I turn off the gas-flame and pour the liquid into the tin.

The fudge safely lodged in the 'fridge, we sit down with cups of tea.

'Tcheegee. What does that mean?'.

'Tchiji. It means sweeties, it's what you say to little children so they be happy and stop crying. "Ah, don't cry, come and have some tchiji."'

'Tcheegee,' I mutter back.

'Tchiji,' coaches Ahmed. 'And in Pakistan, it's lovely, it's . . .' Words fail him, for once. He doesn't really seem to remember it much, but, anyway, it was better than here. Well *here* was better than here, how it used to be.

'I think you ought to come with me to this place. It'll do you good, it'll be a nice walk.'

It won't be a nice walk; it will be very muddy if we go the shorter way. 'Look, Ahmed, you wanted to go on an errand and now I'm sending you on one. And you want me to come as well. That's no sort of errand. In any case,' I say cunningly, 'those sisters would be able to tell you what St Michael's was like inside.' He can't see St Michael's church, because it's down now.

'Every house you've lived in that I ask you about, you always say the same old thing: It's down.'

'Well, it usually is.'

'*And* the church as well!'

Once more we get out the old parish magazine, with the picture of the church on it, and Ahmed fingers the pieces of coloured glass picked from the ruins.

'Those sisters went to St Michael's. The Misses Woodleigh. They taught the babies' class on Sunday afternoons and Miss Emily came every week in this very fancy hat. She used to play the piano and they both used to smile a lot; I suppose because they taught the very tiny children.'

We prepare to leave. The fudge is still quite soft and packed about with greaseproof paper in its tin. I wind round a scarf and Ahmed feels for the spell on his arm and adjusts it, a gesture automatic and unconscious, like small boys used to pull up their winter socks. The spell has got a bit raggy; he has been to the school baths in it.

The front door slams behind us and we walk briskly along the crowded Saturday streets, turning away from the shops down a small cobbled street and into the arboretum. In the afternoon the light is grey and bleak, the grass looks faded; the fountain has been still for many years now. We curve round its railinged side, staring gloomily into the dark pond whose floating vegetation is abloom with Coke bottles and paper cups glowing white in the dim afternoon. There are few people about on this cold afternoon.

In the distance, on a hill, a man walks a dog. A boy cycles past us silently. All about, trees craze black lines into the winter sky and, above the arcade, the clock shows the same time it showed fifteen, twenty years ago: five to three. I wonder about the afternoon when it stopped, always imagine it as a summer afternoon, the grass strewn over with people, bright flowerbeds, a band playing, or rock and roll records, and people eating ice-creams. Nobody notices, but way above the clock has stopped. Always in the winter I imagine it to have stopped on a summer's day. In the summer I don't notice the clock at all. There is something uncanny about this same time all the time, like you're walking through a dream, but the truth; as though a clock pretending that time changes would be a lie.

We pass through the arcade into a small street and cross the main road, descending into an area of mud stretching down to the next main road. A small cluster of new flats, dismal already, clings to the upper road. Streets and streets have been wiped out, thousands of homes, houses with their own gardens, little trees, privacy. Mud, pools of dried concrete, the beginnings of a carpark — the whole area is laid bare, the fall of the land exposed. The lower main road is windy and filthy with paper rubbish. St Michael's House, a new social security office dispensing giros, not bread and wine, stands where the church once stood. We stand before it, maybe hoping for something to happen. Now the houses are down a fierce wind blasts along the road, lifts clapping papers, tosses my hair about, makes Ahmed's pyjama trousers flap. He clutches his parka about him and makes off with the fudge.

I wait by the endless wall of the social security office. Over the road is the sisters' house. Once it was just another house in a terrace, set in streets of terraces. Now it stands stark, the step scrubbed, the dormer window reflecting back the last daylight, more remarkable than anything in sight. When Miss Hester stands at her doorway, what does she see? Does she wipe away the ruins as she looks at them?

Just as the lights go on all along the road I see a little shape speeding towards me. 'Is it all right?'

'Yes. I gave them the fudge and they said thankyou and they liked it.'

'Goody. Was it Miss Hester or Miss Emily?'

'Both of them,' he says lavishly. 'And they were very nice, they asked me in. There was a piano in the room, a big one, and it had lilies standing on the top.'

'Lilies?' It is December. Artificial lilies, obviously.

'And one of them said she could remember you, and the other one gave me a piece of cake. They'd always lived there and they jolly well weren't going to move just for the old Council.'

We look at one another, greatly satisfied.

'And there were books there, and they have an eagle.'

'An eagle?' I sniff the air suspiciously.

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'What do you mean, an eagle?'

'No, not an eagle. An eagle in a picture. A picture of an eagle. On the wall.'

We walk along the darkening road, noisy with traffic departing from the town.

'And Miss Emily, I liked her, she was kind to me, she smelt nice, she smelt of lavender, and she wore a sort of hat, a grey hat . . .'

'*What*?'

He withers mid-sentence. 'No, she hadn't got a hat, not on her head, the hat was on a peg.'

We walk silently now, along the road under the plane trees. When we are nearly in town Ahmed says, 'Carol?' I stop stock still and say grimly, 'Yes?' He swivels his head upwards. 'I never went.' I glare at him. 'I banged on the door and put the fudge on the doorstep and ran off. I thought they might be fierce.' I glare some more. After a while he says, 'They could have had a big dog.'

We have turned into town and stand on the bridge, looking down into the darkness. Across the water stands the lighted cathedral and the Coop cow burns red above the town. The weir spills over relentlessly, enough to wear you out watching it. 'It didn't use to be here,' Ahmed reminisces, 'when everything went zu-uu-up zu-uu-up.' We laugh. We laugh more and more.

'Come on. Let's go and get some tcheegee.'

'Tchiji.'

'Tchiji.'

We wander back up the wide hill, to our part of the town. It's Saturday and Ahmed's mother is waiting to cook his favourite meal — or maybe she isn't — and he hurries off into the night. Rosehill Street is alive with noise and activity; in the new evening the scent of fresh curry floats from the restaurants on the main road. I turn down a side street and make my way home, wondering how Ahmed knew that Miss Emily wore lavender-water, because I hadn't told him. I'd forgotten. He said her hat was grey, and it was grey.

I didn't go to see those sisters, I don't know why. I wanted to. Ahmed, he thought they might be fierce: Miss Hester, waving her fist; 'Miss Hester Woodleigh in defiant mood'. But I remember them smiling, remember the doves and pigeons that nested in the roof of the old church school; the sweet rotting smell that emanated from the old walls as the wall-heaters burnt into them; it still lingers in my nose. I can see Miss Hester smiling, leading forth the singing infants. And Miss Emily, in her pretty hat, playing the battered piano, wind gusting down the chimneys of the empty fireplaces that were big enough to stand in, and all of us singing:

O that I had wings of angels
Here to spread and heavenward fly
I would seek the gates of Sion
Far beyond the starry sky. □

THEATRE

A critic's curtain call

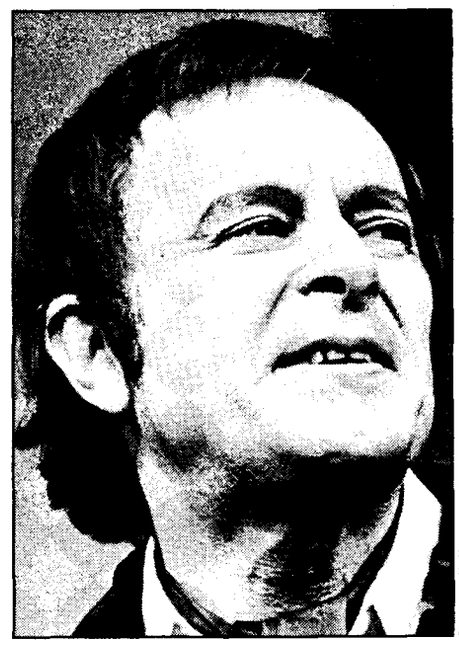
Benedict Nightingale

WAS IT REALLY 1968 when I settled down to review Peter Terson's *Apprentices*, the first object of my critical enthusiasm as the *NS*'s theatre critic? Unbelievably, yes. I never thought I'd survive more than a few months in the job, convinced as I was that my readership, being the sort who read Russell for breakfast and Wittgenstein for afternoon tea, would soon see through my flimsy intellectual pretensions.

Yet here I am signing off 18 years afterwards with what is, I suppose, my last judgment in this slot. *Jacobowsky and the Colonel*, S. N. Behrman's adaptation of Franz Werfel's variations on Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, is fun but a bit lightweight for a National Theatre repertoire already in danger of ballooning into the sky; John Dexter's revival of Eliot's *The Cocktail Party* at the Phoenix, with Alec McCowen forcefully at the head of an uneven cast, leaves a genuine impression of mental avoirdupois, uncomfortably close though the play sometimes comes to the sterile 'society drama' of its era.

There've been some strange moments during those 18 years. I've been solemnly blessed by the Living Theatre — 'Holy nose, holy moustache,' incanted one of their number, naked to a G-string, as he traced a priestly finger over my anatomy — and I've been threatened with a beating-up by John Osborne, presumably for mourning the transformation of the firebrand who wrote *Look Back in Anger* into the blimp responsible for *West of Suez*. In my anxiety for ammo with which to respond appropriately to the promised humiliation, I actually carried around a cream cake in my mac pocket for a time; but, sadly, no pie fight ensued. A foot shot out from the Osborne torso in my vague direction one first night; a picture postcard arrived from 'British Playwrights' Mafia headquarters' warning me it would be safer to shun 'downtown Chichester'; and that was it. All survived undamaged except my mac, which smelt rancid for months.

There've been fulfilling times, too. Some nights, stumbling through driving rain to drab happenings in Croydon or Brent, I've thought that it's a good thing I love the theatre, or I'd certainly hate the theatre; but compensation has always followed soon afterwards. Let me list some of the plays whose premieres I've seen. Storey's *Contractor*, Pinter's *Old Times* and *Betrayal*, Matura's *Play Mas*, Bond's *Fool* and *Bingo*, Stoppard's *Jumpers*, Ayckbourn's *Absurd Person Singular*, Hare's *Teeth 'n' Smiles*, Griffiths's *Comedians*, Poliakoff's *City Sugar*, Rudkin's *Ashes*, Nichols's *Passion Play*, Arden's *Island of the Mighty*, Gray's *Otherwise Engaged*, Edgar's *Destiny*, Whitehead's *Foursome*, Beckett's *Not I*, Taylor's *Good*, Churchill's *Top Girls*. You can't tell me that, when they come to write would-be definitive histories of the 20th-century theatre, those and other plays of the period aren't going to come importantly into the reckoning.



Douglas Jeffery

1973: Alec McCowen's Misanthrope

And performers. I confidently expect to spend my sere years boring generations of mini-Nightingales with memories of Olivier's stricken Shylock, howling out his agony, and McKellen's stealthy Macbeth and Smith's wonderfully witty Millament and Suzman's Masha in *The Three Sisters* and McCowen and Rigg in *The Misanthrope* and Pryce flashing out high-voltage anger at the end of Griffiths's *Comedians* and many, many more. I still think English performers tend to lack the naked energy of the best Americans, but their poise and discipline and ability to convey complexity remains greater; and the old libel that our men and more especially our women are exquisite talking heads, half-paralysed from the neck down, just can't be sustained in the age of Dench, V. Redgrave *et al.* The acting profession I'm leaving in 1986 seems to be more emotionally resourceful and physically expressive than the one I found in 1968.

There are plenty of other developments I've been permitted to witness, some happy, some not. Back in the early Seventies the much-missed Ken Tynan lamented that our theatre was still failing to deal seriously with two pretty central subjects, sex and politics. He might still have a grumble about the first of those two — too little Strindbergian passion, too much menopausal moping — but his complaint about the second might almost be opposite. There's something of a glut of samey, doctrinaire plays about politics. Their hearts are correctly situated, to the Left; but they aren't usually very imaginative (*pace* Howard Barker) or (*pace* Trevor Griffiths)

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very mentally challenging. Too often they're drably naturalistic, insular in outlook and, without realising it, condescending to the mass of their fellow-citizens, who are rarely seen as active verbs or nouns in the nominative. Even Caryl Churchill's admirable *Fen* saw the contemporary peasantry as irredeemably passive; others, needless to say, are more insensitively patronising than that.

Actually, the emergence of Churchill as a major dramatist emphasises what, when those histories are written, may well be regarded as the most significant shift of all. Back in 1968, who could have prophesied that so many and such gifted women would have invaded what then seemed a more or less exclusive male club, British Playwrights Inc? Mark you, not all the changes within that sanctum have been so happy. Arden became the firm of John and Margaretta D'Arcy, and declined into shrillness and stereotype. Ann Jellicoe withdrew from the theatre, as (though not all so absolutely) did Marcus, Mortimer, Livings, even Wesker. The brilliant and underrated C.P. Taylor died, along with those honoured leftovers from an earlier era, Coward, Rattigan and Priestley. Bond, having delivered several plays of Shakespearean sweep, forgot a cardinal rule, that character and situation should determine social and political theory and not vice versa, and fell into a grim, didactic Robespierreanism. Pinter wrote less and less: a sad loss because, for all the talent and promise about, there's still no one of comparable originality on our British horizons.

Douglas Jeffrey

1985: Vanessa Redgrave's Arkadina

I am, I guess, talking mainly about mainstream theatre, though it's a sign of the times, and not altogether a happy one, that it is increasingly difficult to distinguish between that and the 'fringe'. The considerable physical expansion of the fringe — however you define it — has in some ways been accompanied by artistic contraction. Where are the experimenters, the British descendants of Meyerhold, Artaud, Grotowski, Kantor? Or the younger cousins of Steven Berkoff and Pip Simmons, names that established themselves relatively early in my *NS* career? You just don't get the same freshness and excitement, either of style or content, as you did in the late 1960s, when the American avant-garde was still finding new ways of expressing its rage at the Vietnam war and the British one was prepared to learn from it.

But you can't separate a theatre's creativity from its organisation, and especially from the financial conditions sustaining it, subjects that came to preoccupy me more and more. At first all was Sixties optimism and post-Sixties growth. New theatres appeared in Sheffield, Birmingham, Manchester, Leicester and a dozen other places, and some of them, such as Richard Eyre's resurgent Nottingham Playhouse, battled effectively against London centralism. And in town the National at long last opened its South Bank Oz, not without an artistic stutter or two, and then the RSC moved, more unwillingly but also more smoothly, into its very own Alphaville, the Barbican. By that time, though, the government had changed and, with it, arts policies and arts budgets. Suddenly responsible reviewers found themselves switching their critical attention from the stage to the box-office and explaining to their audiences how very much public subsidy had achieved, what a lot we'd lose if it was seriously reduced, why it was unwise to rely on private-sector philanthropy and just how our theatre could deteriorate into a shabby-genteel version of that glossy graveyard, Broadway.

That could still be its fate, too. The West End is presently enjoying a remission, thanks to a profitable obsession with musicals, the canny exploitation of stars and, let's concede, the derring-do of Michael Codron and some other impresarios. Who would have thought Shaftesbury Avenue would assay *The Cocktail Party* the selfsame week the National went commercial with *Jacobowsky*? But there's little long-term comfort for anyone in this reversal of roles. The West End has gradually become dependent both on American tourists and on transfers from state-supported theatres, and neither source seems altogether reliable. Tightwad grants mean that plays in the subsidised sector are becoming fewer, thinner, safer; you might almost say it's being forced into the position of showing itself scarcely worth subsidy in the first place, and the final damage may well be more awful and far-flung than anyone could have forecast.

Still, the land is alive with grim soothsayers, promising doom on every front. That sort of fatalism is one of the English traits I'm off to the ex-colonies to escape. Let me end not by adding to it, but by remembering the fine things. How will I bear not going to the Barbican or Stratford to cavil at Trevor Nunn or Terry Hands or Adrian Noble's newest piece of classical necromancy? How live without celebrating Hugh Quarshie, or Imogen Stubbs, or the latest all-electric discovery? Or debating the promise of Doug Lucie, or the range of Glenda Jackson? Or arguing the merits of Peter Hall, creator of the RSC, recreator of the National and undoubtedly the most important theatrical figure of the last quarter-century? Or gossiping with Billington, Coveney, Nathan and the other lads in the interval? I don't know I can. But thanks for having had me while I've done so.

TELEVISION

Trivial pursuits

Peter Hillmore

RATHER THAN THE traditional Silly Season, this summer is turning out to be a busy news period — with South Africa, the Commonwealth Games boycott, the 'Constitutional crisis' and the long-running Westland affair.

But you wouldn't think so if you worked in television. As far as television is concerned it's the Stupid Season, the time when current affairs programmes go off the air and no drama can be made out of all these crises. You won't hear the nasal tones of Brian Walden protecting Mrs Thatcher on *Weekend World* (his successor in the £100,000 a year job, Matthew Parris, is still learning to read the autocue accurately). David Dimbleby isn't asking any questions on *This Week, Next Week*. Both *World in Action* and *TV Eye* are on holiday and so is *Panorama*. All we are left with is the news bulletins — which actually discourage the seeking out of exclusives by reporters — and the longer, but not by much, analyses on *Newsnight*.

Nobody ever gives me a good reason when I ask them about this long absence. It isn't caused by overwork, as reporters only do a few projects each year and could quite easily manage some more. The real reason is that, while newspapers, even the tabloids, are basically concerned with news in spite of the large blobs of entertainment and pap, television regards current affairs as something it has to do to satisfy the authorities (and maybe win a renewal of the licence franchise). Nobody at London Weekend Television is the least bit concerned by the abysmal viewing figures for *Weekend World*. The purpose of the programme is to get the company mentioned in the papers. Every Sunday, when it's on, a full transcript of the big interview complete with photographs arrives on newsdesks in Fleet Street a couple of hours after transmission.

When I worked at LWT I once naively suggested that the advent of Channel Four would mean that *WW* could go out at a more accessible time in the evenings. The Head of Current Affair's reply was brief — 'God forbid.' He explained that this would mean that 'We'd have to make programmes that people want to watch rather than the ones we want to make' (and nobody wants to watch). You'd expect it to be different now that current affairs-trained people are running the companies. But it isn't. John Birt, the man who developed with Peter Jay the *WW* thesis about a 'bias against understanding' and the philosophy of using two words where one would do, has acquired a bias against current affairs now he runs LWT, demanding 'stars and stunts' from his staff. David Elstein now heads Thames: his main achievement so far is to change the title *This Week* back to *TV Eye*; his big business will be scheduling *Minder*. (These two men wanted to run Channel

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Four.). Gus McDonald, the man who never uses one swear word where two will do, is running Scottish Television, but great current affairs innovations are not expected from him. The system wouldn't allow it.

That's enough about what wasn't on television — what about the things that were? The increasing and healthy tendency of television to look at itself cynically was nicely shown in *Diverse Reports* (C4) when it looked at Not The Royal Wedding and examined the reactions of people in the Ferguson village to the hordes of camera crews.

Disgust was the chief reaction: we learnt that people who are prepared to have a television set in their living room do not always welcome a television crew as well. But the Royal Family seemed to be in a different category, allowing the cameras a lot of access to The Wedding, and it's quite likely that, by the time Prince Edward gets married, the cameras will actually be on the balcony, forcing the couple to keep kissing until the producer is satisfied.

I expect that even now the scriptwriters are working on the next episode of *Palace*, with more developments for Queen Ellie and her family. There's an awful symmetry about the way the Royal Family is portrayed on television. Prince Charles was Action Man with an eye for the girls. He marries and settles down, so Andrew fills the gap with helicopter derring-do and actress girlfriends; then, just when Edward is at the right age to take over, Andrew marries. Even the coverage of Diana and Sarah is subtly different, as it would never do to have identical characters in a soap opera. Diana is the walking clothes-horse, the one that you just look at rather than listen to. So Sarah is presented as different: even new clothes don't fit her but she's bubbly and talkative. Edward will probably marry an intellectual. □

CINEMA

It's so easy to fall in love? Vivian Bell (Helen Shaver) and Cay Rivvers (Patricia Charbonneau)

Back to the future

Adam Mars-Jones

Desert Hearts (18)
Screen on the Hill, Cannon Tottenham Court Road, Electric Screen

IT TOOK DONNA DEITCH over two years to raise the money for her first feature, *Desert Hearts*. She asked her New York friends for the names of people who might be interested in investing, circularised them with a press kit, invited them to a party and made her pitch. She ended up giving about a dozen such parties and had to start a newsletter to keep her investors informed. *Desert Hearts* is an object lesson in how not to give up.

The source of the film is Jane Rule's 1964 novel *Desert of the Heart*, the setting Reno, Nevada, in 1959. Vivian Bell (Helen Shaver), a university professor, arrives from New York for a divorce. To fulfil her six-week residency requirement she books into a local ranch and soon becomes involved with a local woman called Cay Rivvers (Patricia Charbonneau), a free spirit who works as a changemaker at a casino. *Desert Hearts* is an assured first feature, likeable and lively; it also removes all conflict from its subject matter, as if thereby doing it a favour, leaving it bleached and denatured.

One of the central arguments of Vito Russo's book *The Celluloid Closet* is that films about homosexuals are consumed differently from films about hetrosexuals by a general audience: films with gay central characters are seen as being 'about' homosexuality, while films with straight characters are seen as stories about the particular people in the screenplay. This is obviously a prejudicial double-bind, but the way to get beyond it is to subject straight films to more scrutiny, not gay films to less.

There are liable to be at least four areas of painful change for a woman who in maturity ceases to define herself as hetrosexual — all of them judiciously dramatised in John Sayles's admirable film *Lianna* (1983). Her financial standing may suffer if she has been dependent on a man; her social links with assumed friends will be tested; if she has children, her access to them may be restricted; and her expectations of what a sexual relationship can give her are likely to need recasting.

None of these conflicts affect Vivian in *Desert Hearts*. She is childless, financially secure, is out of context socially and so has little to lose; she does her share of smoking and trembling but, actually, her transition has been smoothed for her.

Her relationship with Cay Rivvers is presented as being the marriage that her marriage (which has no characteristics except failure) failed to be. Cay finally convinces her surrogate mother Frances — it seems appropriate that the bond should be a weakened one, the tension reduced — that the relationship has value by appropriating the phrase Frances has used of her own lifelong love: 'She reached in and put a string o' lights round my heart.' A real person might say this tactically, as a way of translating something into a third party's terms, without trying to establish it as truth; but *Desert Hearts* contains no other description of its central relationship. The film claims for homosexuality not parity but identity with the norm.

At the same time it privileges homosexuality on the level of style; Vivian and Cay acquire in effect an exemption from 1959. Cay's woman friend Silver, a country and western singer, and her financé are treated warmly, but their romanticism is shown to be dated and a little silly. They're rather too old to be carrying on as they do, Silver dedicating a song in her set to Joe, Joe sketching a heart on his chest in token of love.

Vivian wears smart suits and slacks until she is coaxed into western wear by Cay; Cay is a cowgirl throughout. Neither has a hairstyle that might threaten a modern audience's identification with them. Underneath the superficial daring of its subject-matter, *Desert Hearts* plays just as safe as it can.

There must be real benefits for someone who wants to tell a love story between women in locating it before Women's Liberation. That way you can be sure your film won't look like a tract, every character a walking issue of *Spare Rib*. But by setting out to celebrate women's possibilities you can end up with an almost anti-feminist stance. An example of this would be Rita Mae Brown's novel *Six of One*, which starts at the turn of the century. All the historical details have been researched to within an inch of their lives, but the emotions are purely anachronistic. A niggling question is likely to occur to the reader, or the audience: if all this was always possible for women, if strength of character was all it came down to, why did anyone waste time on feminism?

Vivian in *Desert Hearts* asks a young man who has befriended her, 'Walter, how'd you learn to be a gentleman?', and he answers, 'The movies'. But Vivian, for all her tremulousness, is able to get and defend what she wants and nobody asks her how she learned that. Certainly not from the movies. By mystifying the sources of women's strength, *Desert Hearts* ends up doing a mild disservice to the cause it would dearly like to advance. □

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Uncommon wealth

Naseem Khan

IT FEELS pretty lonely, going up to Edinburgh — like being an Israelite going the wrong way over the Red Sea. Who will be there at the Commonwealth Arts Festival, third of its kind and predicted such a short time ago as the biggest and best so far?

There's no doubt that the sawdust has leaked out of it. Gambia gone and Ghana; no Nigerian National Troupe, no Bagamoyo College of Arts. No Rajastani musicians and dance-drama from India's northern Manipur state. A blackboard, updated daily, has replaced the official printed programme. 'As you know,' said the compere gamely at the Music Village, 'we make up our lunchtime sessions as we go along, and this is no exception . . .' Stiff upper lips and a refusal to be downhearted masked what must surely have been, underneath it all, dejection. For it was not only that around one third of the programme had gone, in conjunction with the boycott of the Commonwealth Games. That third included some of the centrepieces; the largest contingents (Kenya's group — turned back when they got to Austria — would have been 60-strong) and most waited-for work.

But, for all the withdrawals, a programme still remained, and a viable one. On each of the three days I was there, six different performances took place. There was a free music and dance event at lunchtime in the 2,000-seater 'Music Village' (a huge bird-like canopy slung over the bandstand and terraced seating in Princes Street gardens), afternoon lecture-demonstrations and workshops in one of the two smaller marquees beside it, evening performances and late-night events in the Assembly Rooms. And performance was just one part of it. Upstairs in the Assembly Rooms ballroom you'd have found artists and public working together, making big white flying birds and banners that would eventually dilute the pomp of the ballroom's formal grandeur. Meanwhile, down in the bar, odd groups of musicians unexpectedly took over the space (Northern Ireland followed by St Vincent). Further along the corridor, the recorded voices of children from a variety of continents talked about the way they saw the world. Their voices mingled with slides of their pictures in a tape-slide show, 'Let's Join Hands'. And, on the pavement outside in George Street, an ancient, unexplained butler, covered in cobwebs, a stuffed robin on one dusty shoulder, waited for any curious passer-by to ring his bell for service.

A semblance of a geographical spread just about remained. The Caribbean dominated, with Trinidad, Dominica, St Vincent and Grenada. Jamaica is due later. Malawi and Botswana, however, were the sole representatives of Black Africa, Tonga and Singapore of the Far East. Despite rumours of Canada's departure, all the white Commonwealth was in place.

What came over most clearly was the unparalleled potential of an event like the Commonwealth Arts Festival. By extension, it suggested an alternative scenario to the politics of withdrawal. For a start, Edinburgh, as some groups discovered, could be made to provide a showcase for the ideas behind the fight against apartheid. No one, for instance, could have watched Marangarena's version of Fugard's *The Island* (particularly when played, as it was, by two exiles from South Africa) and remained ignorant of the issues. Britain's own Pan Project, whose work derives from multicultural fusions, leafletted its audiences about sanctions. A special Artists Against Apartheid concert was arranged for the final days.

Easy gestures, some might think, but the theme of equality was more than skin-deep. The work of many of the people that I saw was an acknowledged result of cooperation. When Australian musician Colin Offord paid tribute to the Nigerian musicians who had influenced his work, he was not alone. Cross-references and interchange emerged as one of the nascent themes of the festival, from the wide-ranging textiles exhibition at the City Arts Centre (where the boycotting nations were all still represented) to smaller matters. Some of it was curious (like a look at the bagpipes of Northumbria, Scotland and Malta); some of it was optimistic (like the Australian children's play *Honeyspot*, whose young heroine created a dance for her scholarship exam that, in defiance of her prejudiced father, drew on the culture of her aborigine friends); some of it was moving (like Botswana's Marangarena Company). There were warnings too. Stella Kon's *Emily of Emerald Hill*, beautifully played by Margaret Chan, traced the evolution of a monstrous Chinese matriarch, her roots in a society whose wealthy had slavishly imitated the West. Feminism, self-definition, sharing and freedom: they all emerged as urgent concerns in a range of the work. But, because the field was attenuated, they lost the development they could have had.

Troubled as it was, Edinburgh's Commonwealth Arts Festival had the making of an extraordinarily varied platform for a spread of work and ideas not often seen side by side, and all too rarely seen in Britain. In such a context, Jamaica's decision to send its arts team to the Arts Festival but not its sports team to the Commonwealth Games makes perfect sense: perceptive rather than contradictory. For the former constituted a timely reminder of the very equality of talent and interchange of ideas that apartheid, Pik Botha and Mrs Thatcher deny. □

JAZZ

Summertime

Charles Fox

THE MAGAZINE *Poetry Chicago* used to carry across its back page — maybe it still does? — a line by Whitman: 'To have great poets there must be great audiences too.' Whether true or not of poetry, the statement makes sense when applied to performing arts. And to jazz most particularly, especially earlier on in America, when audiences actually participated, strutting behind marching bands in New Orleans, jitterbugging to Chick Webb at the Savoy Ballroom, urging on Charlie Parker in one of the steamy clubs around 52nd Street. Here in Britain things operated differently, more a matter of clapping while seated, a recognition that jazz had become a newer kind of concert music.

That decorous state of affairs still persists. The Capital Jazz Festival, one of three festivals I visited during the past month, staged its major events at the Royal Festival Hall, a context that particularly suited the Herbie Hancock Quartet — not one of Hancock's electric ensembles but totally acoustic, a reversion to the pianist's earlier persona. Ron Carter's double bass growled like a Borzoi and the saxophonist, Branford Marsalis, showed himself to be perhaps a more resourceful improviser than his famous brother. Beginning with a theme by a British songwriter, 'Limehouse Blues', the quartet remained unfalteringly brilliant, yet intimate. All very different in character from what went on the evening before, when Lionel Hampton presided over the latest of his big bands. There were the usual genuflections to the leader's lengthy career yet also arrangements of pieces such as 'Milestones'. The most delicious moments came from Hampton himself. A largely unaccompanied solo started out as 'Ain't Misbehavin', but ended up as 'Bye Bye Blues'.

Trekking to Berkshire or further West for an entire weekend implies more commitment than dropping in at a nearby concert hall. Stamina is called for as well as aesthetic breadth. That situation prevails at the Bracknell Jazz Festival, back on its old stamping ground after last summer's enforced transportation to Tring. (And this is where I should declare a personal involvement — as an unsalaried, non-expense-drawing member of the Festival's board of directors.) But where the Capital Festival sticks to big names, Bracknell, for artistic as well as economic reasons, has always opted for the up-and-coming rather than the comfortably established. Nonetheless, what overwhelmed the audience most this year was Nu, a quintet led by Don Cherry, who came to the fore playing his Pakistani pocket trumpet with Ornette Coleman a quarter of a century ago. Carlos Ward was the saxophonist; Nana Vasconcelos played, among other instruments, the berimbau — like a longbow stuck into a pumpkin; Ed Blackwell, another

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of Ornette's old buddies, drummed with the kind of unobtrusive authority for which Sid Catlett used to be renowned. Luckily Radio 3 recorded the music, so a much wider audience can hear it eventually.

One of Bracknell's virtues is the way it concentrates upon encouraging British and European jazz. So there were newly commissioned pieces by Django Bates and Steve Berry for Loose Tubes and by Ian Carr for three jazz soloists and a 14-piece string ensemble: pleasantly successful. Charlie Watts's gargantuan big band played hits from the past, with dazzling solos from two tenor saxophonists, Bobby Wellins and Evan Parker, the latter kicking off like Coltrane but moving inexorably further and further out. Parker turned up again the next day with John Stevens's Freebop, jousting with the much-touted — and much-talented — young saxophonist Courtney Pine, an encounter that conjured up excitement of a sort familiar in jazz from the earliest times. Not so, however, the sardonic tampering, vocally as well as instrumentally, with ballads — 'Change Partners', 'Secret Love' — by The Melody Four, typically enough a trio, organised by Steve Beresford, a prankster even in his avant-garde days but an exceptional pianist too, aided by Tony Coe and the resolutely eccentric Lol Coxhill.

Eccentricity — visual eccentricity, that is — was frequently in evidence at the WOMAD festival, held near Clevedon in Somerset, beside a waterway known as Blind Yeo. But here it was members of the audience who dressed up for the occasion. 'Whatever you like to pay over ten pee — lovely pictures of Glastonbury and Winnie The Pooh'; the sales-pitch implied the ambience. Oddities did turn up on stage — the Three Mustaphas, for instance, five be-fezzed Brits toying rather too jokily with Balkan techniques. But most of the time the emphasis was upon the genuinely ethnic, including forebears of the Afro-American tradition. So the Gambian troupe of musicians and dancers offered both wiggling buttocks and beatific singing by one of the kora players.

The music closest to jazz during the first day and a half (Courtney Pine's Jazz Warriors and Hugh Masakela had still to appear) came from Dan Del Santo and his Princes of Pleasure, a nine-piece band from Texas. Del Santo, a fine guitarist, alternately whippy and soulful, describes what his band does as World Music, a mingling of African and soca, of blues and bebop. Outstanding among several good soloists was the conga player, Quincy Jarman. Yet neither his name nor that of most sidemen performing at WOMAD were to be found in the festival programme. Which reflects one sizeable difference between this gathering and those at the other two festivals. For jazz is, above everything else, the creation of particular people, and a jazz audience insists upon knowing who they are.

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The pen, for West Germans, mayn't be *mightier* than the riot shield, but it's putting up a healthy struggle

The xerox and the catapult

Martin Chalmers

Bootlegged bestsellers, a thriving Left press, wide-ranging debates: in West Germany, radical publishing is still a success story

WHEN I FIRST visited West Germany in the late Seventies, the 'alternative' scene was at its height, with ever-widening networks of left-wing institutions and services. At the very beginning of the New Left, famous journals like *Das Argument* and *Kursbuch* had been established. Later, and at an accelerating speed, came alternative publishers, bookshops, magazines, nurseries, pubs, women's centres, cafés and cinemas, stimulated by the women's movement and by new libertarian tendencies like the 'Spontis' (Spontaneists). By 1979, collectives were being set up to run anything from printers to bakeries and car-repair workshops.

In the second half of the Eighties, such institutions and collectives, though still a feature of many West German towns and cities, are no longer as prominent or distinctive, and many aspects of this movement have been under considerable pressure. Some observers like to perpetuate the image of German radicalism being constantly persecuted by the state, but in this case the main pressures are actually a consequence of the movement's success in creating an autonomous left-wing sphere. Business and state cultural bodies copied its innovations, helping to blur the distinction between what was 'alternative' and what was not. The movement has grown too diffuse to maintain earlier loyalties, and too large to escape determination by business interests and constraints.

Left-wing bookshops, often meeting-places as much as shops, remain both useful and pleasurable to visit, and there are many more than there ever were in Britain. But during the Seventies more and more mainstream outlets began stocking the books and journals once only found in the left shops. Left publishers themselves began to expand, and often found that established booksellers made more reliable business partners. Larger publishing houses, too, responded increasingly quickly to the interests of the 'scene' (the term — *Szene* in German — used to cover all the contradictory tendencies and activities in what was once the Left, encompassing everything from the Green Party and the intellectual avant-garde outside the universities, to chic bars and punk squatters). They bought up titles and set up their own specialist imprints for women,

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ecology and history-from-below. Left bookshops have thus been forced into a painful process of rationalisation.

Yet Germany, much more than Britain, remains a country of the printed word, of the book. Peter Handke has observed that 'no other country numbers so many "incorrigibles", . . . so many of the dispersed and obscure nation of readers.' This is evident in a number of ways: railway-station bookshops actually *are* bookshops; German book design is probably the best in Europe. Books are not only relatively cheaper than in Britain — given the difference in average incomes — but often absolutely cheaper. And if the same bestsellers sometimes seem to dominate the charts for months on end (for example, Christa Wolf, Günter Wallraff, Isabel Allende and Patrick Süskind's novel *Perfume* — due to be published here in September, Hamish Hamilton and Penguin having paid a record price for the rights), still publishers seem to throw an astonishing quantity of literature, translations, history, politics, social science and reportage into the bookshops every month — most of it in paperback.

The prominence of the printed word produces its own form of deviance: bootleg books or book piracy. Book pirating began in the Sixties, when long out of print Marxist classics were distributed and sold in photocopied form. During the Seventies and Eighties, bootleggers have turned their attention to undercutting bestsellers or expensive editions for which there was a market. When Eco's *The Name of the Rose* was still a hardback it was pirated; if a Jean Baudrillard translation is published as an expensive paperback, it is pirated. Patrick Süskind's *Perfume* became a bestseller at 29.80 marks (about £8). It was very quickly available as a bootleg, not in the same quality of course, and with a soft cover, but at 14.80. The pirates have survived despite all the efforts of the publishers, courts and police.

If some areas of radical activity are contracting, there seems to be no stopping the growth of political, literary and cultural journals that began in the late Seventies as orthodox Marxism collapsed. Some, like *Freibeuter* in Berlin, with its ability to combine political discussion, good writing and a cultural openness, are among the best journals in Europe today. The most recent issue, apart from its German contributors, also manages to include Georges Duby, Djuna Barnes, John Berger and Giorgio Manganelli. In such journals, as well as in the left-libertarian daily *TAZ (die Tageszeitung)* and magazines like the Frankfurt fortnightly *Pflasterstrand*, there is political discussion of an urgency and range often absent in Britain.

At the level of what could be called 'strategy', one of the most fascinating and important developments in left politics is the search, by libertarians and former autonomists in Germany, for effective modes of political transformation. The aim is to explore and find ways of giving more decisive political effect to the cultural and social changes of the last two decades, without denying a personal and collective history of direct action and cultural politics. Daniel Cohn-Bendit of *Pflasterstrand*, and Joschka Fischer, the Green Minister of the Environment in the federal state of Hesse, are among the best-known figures involved.

At a more topical and immediate level, Chernobyl continues to inflect political argument in the summer of '86. This was evident less, perhaps, in discussion of the disaster itself (though the number of books on it is already well into double figures), than in responses to the massive police mobilisations against anti-nuclear demonstrations in the subsequent months. In the letters page of the *TAZ* this debate has polarised between the 'Stahlkugel Fraktion' (the 'steel ball-bearing fraction' — in other words, those that use catapults and other weapons against the police) and the 'ballot-paper fraction'.

In West Germany, the issue is certainly not a marginal one. It comes down to a question of what means are permissable against decisions which may be democratically reached, but which have long-lasting and unforeseeable consequences. This angry exchange inevitably relates to the search for politically effective action. It also overlaps with renewed discussion of the role and origins of violence on the Left, and particularly the emergence of terrorist or armed-struggle groups from the student and anti-authoritarian movements of the Sixties.

The daily newspaper, the *TAZ*, was, like the Green Party, founded towards the end of the 'alternative' period, and has become firmly established. Sales fluctuate, but a base of 30,000 subscribers gives it a degree of stability. It is open to all the voices of the 'scene' and pays close attention to the activities and prospects of the Greens. As well as news material and regional supplements it carries a considerable range of features and articles. A recent issue, for example, included a piece on Afro-German women 'coming out' as Black, an interview with the French cultural historian Gérard Raulet on French and German convergences and differences in the evaluation of post-modernism, and finished off with a back page report on the past and present of Bath (England).

It would be unwise to make facile comparisons between Britain and West Germany. However, one of the characteristic strengths of the (post-) Left culture there points to a weakness in Britain. While West Germany retains a strong, dense, varied range of magazines and journals, the British Left seems almost scared of giving space to the written word, of thinking in print. Wary of being left behind with mere print in the brave new world of electronic media, the tendency here is continually to compress and abbreviate discussions. In West Germany, too, the processes by which words — and ideas — reach the page are undergoing immense technological changes. But those printed pages remain the essential base for debate, and for a vigorous and innovative Left politics. □

By the embankment

Paul May

There was demolition
Spot on a certain hour
When we landed in the street
And the pubs came down like dominoes.

We men would meet in the sooty field,
Pose in the stubble and toast ourselves.
It was a good crack, real exclusive;
Until I swelled out of fashion.

(By the Embankment
Women catch my pudding and pie
And run so slowly, like the river.)

That night I got the message, separated myself
And toured the beds of broken green glass.
Eminent men had fallen asleep
Under eyeshades and gin bottles;
And we were only saving places.

The English know how to queue,
They have a patience which forgets ends,
They don't really want to arrive.
I could learn to manage
And to measure a prospect.
I could go along with that,
Fall in with this.

I've been all around the houses
Like a long piece of dark water,
My eyes down for coins.

Horn of plenty

Val Wilmer

Let's Join Hands and Contact the Living: Ronnie Scott and his Club
JOHN FORDHAM *Elm Tree* £6.95

SAXOPHONIST Ronnie Scott once said he could stop a runaway horse by putting money on it. Bored in Bangor one afternoon, he lost the band's wages in a betting-shop. Only a born gambler's luck helped him win them back by a whisker. Betting-shops , card-dens, bookie's runners and gangster's parlours have played almost as big a role in the life of this respected British musician as the ever-changing variations on chord-patterns that characterise the music at which he excels. Had it been otherwise, he would never have opened the club that has borne his name for 27 years.

Only recently has jazz meant anything other than funny hats to the Clapham omnibus

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traveller. It did once, but that was before Beatlemania. What had been a respectable, albeit eccentric, pursuit for some, a means to a living for others, was relegated to the backroom of British memory. There it stayed until 'resurrected' as a serious alternative to rock by the updated Miles Davis. That individual musicians maintained their dedication to the demanding craft of telling their own story within an African-American framework went unnoticed by the public — with the possible exception of Scott.

This volume chronicles the saxophonist's move 'Up West', away from his Jewish East End background via Edgware and the leading bands of the day; his own efforts as bandleader and improviser and, despite a reckless and reprobate nature, his insistence on dignified treatment for the artist at all times.

Scott's early devotion to music intensified when he travelled to New York in the Forties via 'the boats'. There he heard beboppers like Parker in their prime and tried to reproduce on his horn the emotional depth of the music, its harmonic and rhythmic vitality. He eventually put what he learned about presentation and the musician's need for respect into the club.

To great artists like Rollins, Webster and Dexter Gordon, that room became home; the thoughtfulness of Scott and partner Pete King unequalled elsewhere. Equally remarkable, they gave opportunities to newcomers, even if sometimes at odds with their music. And amazingly, kept their heads above water — just.

Both saxophonist and emporium inspire fondness, yet offstage Scott has been dogged by insecurity, about his playing and the ability to make something of his life. Remarkably for one who always played it close to the chest, he has permitted John Fordham to go into these matters in detail, and to draw uncritically from the women with whom he formed relationships in what comes across as at times a tortured emotional life. These are unusual insights, instructive for the naive who imagine the 'names' have it made. To his credit, the author never lets us forget that whatever the achievements of Scott and his compadres, transplanted Africans provided the source for all their creative endeavour. But grafting on

Beyond good and evil

Alan Brien

FROM TIME TO TIME, on a half-heard news broadcast, in a half-glimpsed newspaper story, I learn of the forceful dispersal of a demonstration, the protesters beaten, the leaders dragged off to prison, emergency regulations enforced by police and army. Instantly, my political auto-pilot switches on. I condemn this state terrorism, contempt for civil rights, suppression of dissidence. What sort of person, from a safe distance, can approve and defend such actions? I ask.

The answer is me. For on second examination, it turns out the demonstrators were supporters of President Marcos, old comrades of General Franco, the rejuvenated Ku Klux Klan. I have to struggle with the controls to stop myself this time making excuses for the authorities, even from finding some pleasure in the other side having their heads cracked for a change. Very few of us, unconditionally, endorse Rosa Luxemburg's proclamation: 'Freedom is always freedom for the one who thinks differently.' I am not entirely sure we should.

This central dilemma of the Left finds a classic illustration in Valentine Cunningham's anthology, **Spanish Front: Writers on the Civil War** (Oxford, £4.95). Cunningham's range is wide and rich, from Belloc to Auden, stopping off at Greene, Trotsky, Hemingway, Beckett and many less famous names, with a generous sprinkling of women. At the time a schoolboy activist, a Marxist jingo, I never doubted there must be an indelible line between goodies and baddies, the Left and the Right. The Fascists committed all the atrocities — that was why they were Fascists.

Half a century later, these accounts of the Spanish Civil War destroy such easy benchmarks, though the weight of historical justice remains immovably on our side. Koestler's diary of the death cell (even if we must remember he was a Comintern agent) suggests a cold cat-and-mouse process by the insurgents compared to the hot-blooded impulses of the Republicans. George Bernanos, Catholic and monarchist, testifies in Majorca to the atrocities committed by the Christian party, then Simone Weil's open letter supplies an almost mirror image of executions by the forces of democracy.

There are many incidental revelations. For example: who wrote the poem containing the lines 'What peace I knew then/In gazing on his battered face/Purer than any woman's!'? Remember the bull-shitting, dictator-lover Roy Campbell's verse, 'The Sodomites are on your side/The cowards and the cranks.' Who claimed, after it was all over, 'The major problem of our time is the decay of the belief in personal immortality'? Yeats? Belloc? Eliot? The solution to both — George Orwell.

Orwell thought Franz Borkenau's **The Spanish Cockpit** (Pluto, £4.95) the best book written on Spain. This re-issue permits us to test and confirm his judgment. Borkenau was an early sociologist who saw that this was a golden opportunity (even if it meant being thrown into prison himself) to examine *homo politicus* under extremes of pressure. Dedicated only to the exactitude of truth, he advances many controversial theories — as, for instance, that terror exercised by the ordinary people turns out to be not only briefer and less perverted, but also more just and accurate than terror by special police squads. They know their victims and are punishing them not for what they have just done but for what they have long been.

Less than 20 years before, the First World War produced a similar crisis of confidence in established values, in the authority of Kings, Emperors, Presidents and Prime Ministers. The seventieth anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, one of humanity's most awful and awesome blood-lettings, has seen the re-issue of two of the best books on that war: Frederic Manning's **Her Privates We** (Hogarth, £3.95) and P. J. Campbell's **In the Cannon's Mouth** (Hamish Hamilton, £6.95). The first is a novel, not published until 1930 and only now issued in an unexpurgated form, remarkable for its unforced, candid flow, its surface acceptance but underground horror at everyday life in a mad world. The second is a memoir of first-hand experiences by a still-living survivor, not set down until 1977, but sounding and feeling as if written only weeks afterwards.

With John Costello's **Love, Sex and War** (Pan, £3.95), we reach my war, 1939-1945, and indeed my sex, if not love. I am not sure that he quite appreciates how (in my view) love was used by both partners as an excuse and justification for sex, for shared comforts, for playing house in a way understood, if never stated, to be temporary, a fleeting antidote to fear of death and loneliness. But he seems to get everything else well in focus under his ruthlessly peering magnifying glass, applied to what were for many, despite all the horrors, the best years of their lives.

Valentine Cunningham, in the introduction to *Spanish Front*, claims that in the Thirties it 'went without saying' that supposed documentary records were really 'story-tellers' fakings'. I must say that is news to me. What about today? How much are we supposed to take for totally accurate the transcription from notebooks of Gavin Young's **Slow Boats Home** (Penguin, £3.95) or Patrick Marnham's **So Far From God** (Penguin, £3.95) or Jan Morris's **Journeys** (Oxford, £4.95)? All are written with a concern for language, an eye for images, that was rare in any non-fiction a generation ago but now is provided as standard.

Gavin Young is more like a novelist, part Greene part Maugham, with a touch of Herr Issyvoo. I feel I could follow his hero, forever confident, though not caring much, that a plot will one day emerge in volume ten or so. Marnham is equally adventurous, and observant, but I feel alienated now and then by his cold and callous attitude towards many people he meets. Jan Morris does not travel so rough, keeping out of trouble, slipping through the guards and the bureaucrats, to tea with the ladies. She is better on America and the East than England, Scotland or Scandinavia; at her best she is unbeatable. □

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odd bits of Black history is no substitute for familiarity with the milieu in which the music developed.

Thus, apart from the improbably stereotyped picture Fordham draws of Jewish women, there are some thoughtless racial slurs. To say musicians of Armstrong's generation had 'gone along with' racism is shameful; they fought it. Further, to deplore the discrimination Black servicemen faced here during World War Two, yet follow up with hearsay linking them with prostitution does grave disservice to white women who endured racist jibes to develop relationships with Blacks, not to mention men who pioneered such contact when accustomed to segregationist strictures.

This apart, and the occasional mistake — New York's Apollo is a theatre, not a ballroom — John Fordham has done Scott and the musical community a service by producing an eminently readable and, at times, quite poignant history. □

SCIENCE FICTION

Tri-angles

Josephine Saxton

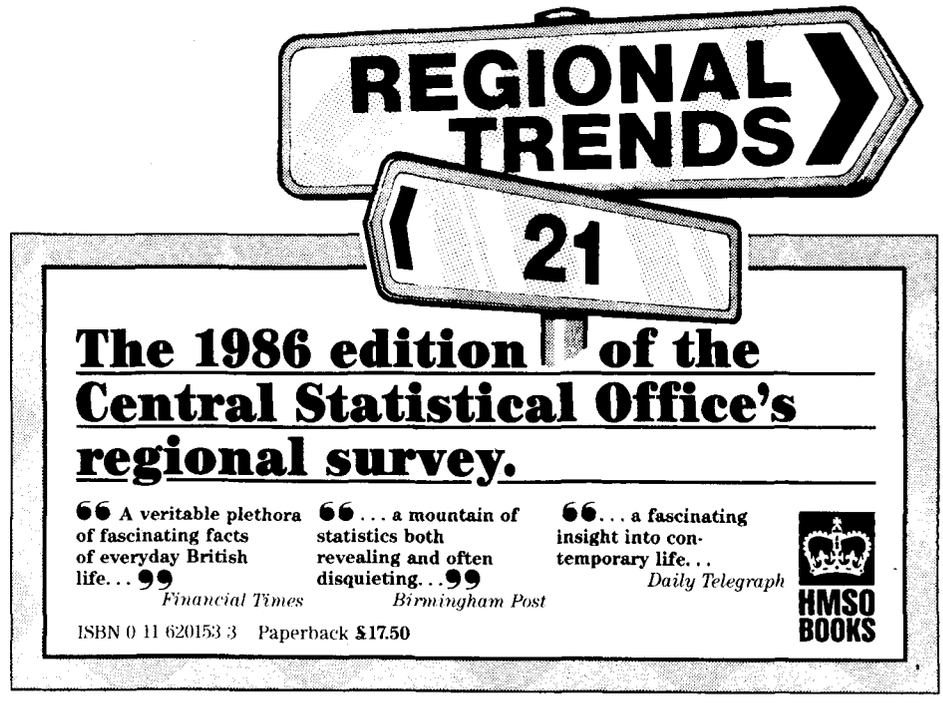
A BOOKSELLER recently told me that he had refused to stock an earlier edition of a book of mine because it contained only 128 short pages for the (then) high price of £1.95 and was therefore poor value. I obstinately refuse to turn out sf trilogies by the metre, but others seem to have caught on: quantity is the thing, and by that standard I have just dragged myself through three First Parts of three of these teratogenic authors' works which are extremely good value. I was within 14 pages of the last push up of Stephen Lawhead's **Empyrion** (Lion, £2.95) wondering how it would be possible to tie in all the loose ends when I chanced to notice that it *was* only Part One. I relaxed — Treet, Pizzle, Yarden the mysterious and beautiful and Crocker the pilot will have acres of print in which to plod through what seem to be Tokyo markets, meaningful diseases and the statutory Temple Rituals. Thank goodness, I had thought it was going to be one of those new-fangled open endings. If David Lindsay's classic *A Voyage to Arcturus* had been less weird and also inflatable, it would have turned out like this.

Bob Shaw's **The Ragged Astronauts** (Gollancz, £9.95) is about a bunch of brave lads leaving Land for Overland, plagued by Pterthacosis which, if you get it, entails confession and a choice of death styles, Bright Road and Dull Road. Lots of sword fights but women to tend the wounds and create a bit of tension by getting raped while pregnant. I took the Bright Road (quicker) but found myself in Phillip Mann's **Master of Paxwax** (Gollancz, £9.95), a Romeo and Juliet saga concerning power politics not unlike a TV soap, far distant future of course. If you put one book down and pick up another by mistake it is quite easy not to notice, so interchangeable are the elements and events. Mann invents aliens beautifully and pointlessly. It would seem that thousands enjoy being bored cheaply at great length. Three times.

What luck then to read something full of wit, inventiveness and hilarity, the kind of book which could give science fiction a good name, because it has managed not to be so accursedly stamped. Stefano Benni's **Terra!** (Pluto, £9.95) won the Bancarelli prize and is a bestseller in Italy, so says the unusually well-designed cover. A deep-frozen post-World War Three world does not sound a promising setting for laugh after laugh (I dropped it in a paroxysm — laughing aloud when alone is always a good test of humour on the page I think), but this speedy yet elegant writer scatters his dark background with numerous pearls. That he blatantly mocks sf clichés and remixes elements from *Hitch-Hiker's . . ., Temple of Doom, Moby Dick,* Ray Bradbury (an army of Japanese mice), adds a robot who smokes in bed, literally, after a scorching time out with a Pornorobot, crocodiles and iconoclasm, *and* does it very well, excites my admiration. The entire work is a serious, deadly comment about now — and how better to accomplish such a feat than with unwavering cynicism? Benni garnishes all this with interludes in the form of fables worthy of separate collection. I could relish the next two volumes, but intelligence is at work here and he knows when to stop: at 360 pages.

The World Omnibus of Science Fiction (Penguin, £3.50) has just been reissued, containing what the sf label hides from wider readership: good short stories, including a brilliant example by Bob Shaw. Collections of anything from around the world can be dire or merely curious (the only example of parsnip wine from Tasmania), but the editors have managed to avoid those obvious pitfalls. Poland was represented by Konrad Fialkowski, rather than Stanislaw Lem who is world renowned, and justly so but not only for his sf works. His **One Human Minute** (Deutsch, £7.95) may entrap unwary 'mainstream' readers, for this too appears as a mere book although it falls well within some parameters of the genre. Short, witty, dry and wry, this is the supreme anti-trilogy: three in one, book reviews of the distant future which deftly reveal entire world histories. Lem is a humorist with a truly fantastic vision, if we take the author's meaning of the word to be '. . . that which goes beyond the limit of our conceptions.' His reviewer, with whom I agree, 'remains . . . convinced that the poverty of today's fantasy and science fiction lies in the fact that there is too little of the fantastic in it, in contrast to the reality which surrounds us.' He refers to a book of summarised facts showing what individuals planet-wide are doing in any one minute, a goggle-boggle record idea which in his hands is authentic and *sui generis*. A work of this calibre illustrates the difference between *absorbing* and *escapist*.

Ursula Le Guin's **Always Coming Home** (Gollancz, £10.95) is a completely realised future world history of survivors who clearly have learnt their lesson of how to live in harmony with Nature, Amerindian fashion. The daughter of anthropologist and ethnologist Alfred L. Kroeber, the author displays intense nostalgia for the way of life of people who 'might be going to have lived a long, long time from now in Northern California'. The novel is a collection of short pieces, some previously published, decorated with drawings (artefacts do not change, I see), the usual maps, glossary and even wholefood recipes. It has the virtue of some very fine writing in a romantic-didactic tone, but I wish Le Guin would devote her considerable talents and knowledge to creating a real novel instead of a cult book in more than one sense. The audio cassette of portentously spoken 'poems' and fake ethnic music which accompanies it (£6.95 extra) will not, I am certain, get into the charts. What will my bookseller think of the Luxury Edition at forty quid? Plenty to keep him (and me) quiet on long winter evenings, and it has no sf stamp upon its noble forehead. Parsnip wine or rare treasure, one is quite enough. □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Neapolitan Wedge

Marek Kohn

THE AIRLINER parks a few dozen metres from a rake of NATO fighter-bombers. To reach its berth, it taxies past a gaggle of plump little transport planes. A couple of them are painted in desert camouflage and marked with the green discs of the Colonel's Libyan Arab Republic Air Force. You notice a certain hike in the temperature even before you step out onto the Naples tarmac.

The static pageant of aircraft at loggerheads is an appropriate introduction to a city containing a balance of forces which presents a beguilingly exotic spectacle to the Northern imagination. The mighty US Sixth Fleet is the most visible of these forces when it is in dock. The least visible is the Camorra, the local Mafia. Arrayed against it is the powerful organisation of the Communist Party (PCI), and it is the strength of the latter in Naples which brings Red Wedge over from Britain. Do British engineers touch down here as well, one wonders, to service the Rolls-Royce engines on the Libyans' Italian-built transports?

The occasion is the Young Communists' national festival, the first to be held for ten years. It was feared that the radicals of the Movement of '77, directing their fury at the party of historic compromise, would have torn such events to shreds. Those days are hard to imagine now, as well-groomed young Italians in their crisp casual outfits saunter through the gardens in which the activities are taking place. We're a couple of dozen strong, billed on the posters as though we were another of the British rock groups who have been booked as the entertainment for most of the evenings. Which is fair enough : even its activists find it quite hard to give a clear account of just what Red Wedge is.

The afternoon press conference, held, like the other events, al fresco, gives us a chance to account for ourselves. A cultural movement, an independent lobby for youth in politics, an expression of the radical Left, red rock impresarios . . . and the Italians wanted to know about Live Aid too. A single microphone and a single Italian speaker can do little to clear the communication choke-point. It transpires that Easterhouse, a rock band dedicated to the Revolutionary Communist Party, have queered the pitch earlier in the week, describing Red Wedge as 'static'. We do our best to exude dynamism.

The concert party divides roughly into musicians and writers, the latter being in attendance to debate issues arising out of the festival's theme, Africa, with our Eurocomrades. Despite a relaxed organisational posture on our hosts' part, a delegation eventually takes the platform for the Africa-and-music discussion. Behind the audience and the evening crowds, the sun sinks towards the Mediterranean. Africa is a lot nearer than it had been this morning, but not near enough for its bulk to impinge upon us.

In fact, I rapidly begin to feel a lot farther away from it than I did in London, being at the far end of a chain of Chinese whispers which has to serve instead of a full translation of the Italian journalists' *discorsi*. What commentary we can get suggests that the ten-minute speeches are covering a waterfront as extensive as the one in front of us, making it almost impossible to respond in the mode of a debate. I gaze at the dusk. I gaze, a little ostentatiously, at my Berlitz phrasebook. I am seized with ultraleftism and make a speech about how artists and pop industry employees must become self-conscious workers exerting pressure on capital to abandon apartheid. It gets a polite ripple. A pity Easterhouse aren't there to approve.

The next morning, similar proceedings are conducted with PCI and Wedge celebrities. The set-piece is leaden. Under the marquee, the erstwhile Private Billy Bragg of the Royal Armoured Corps recognises the searing edge to a jet's roar that marks a military plane. The Tornado passes over and out to sea, having drowned out little of consequence. Later, sitting out on the pavement eating Neapolitan pizzas, we discover the true potential of international contact as we swap notes with the rock journalists detailed to take care of the British. Steve Lewis, who manages the group Animal Nightlife, reveals an encyclopaedic knowledge of Italian left politics — Nightlife's après-beach soul gets them plenty of work in Mediterranean resorts. A straw poll surprises the Italians by disclosing just two Labour Party members, neither of them paid up; the Italians themselves turn out not to be PCI members. One even admits to taking part in the Movement of '77. It seems that radicals in Britain and Italy have taken similar paths; and here we are, converging at last. Who's the rising PCI star, we wonder. Our minder searches for a word to describe the ambitious Young Communist leader. Forlena is . . . 'a yuppie'. A sympathetic chorus assures him that we know the feeling.

The musicians go throught their paces triumphantly, despite language barriers which must make Billy Bragg's crashing electric folksongs and Skint Video's satirical parodies almost completely incomprehensible. The Young Communists got British pop, Party leader Natta *and* the secretary of the ANC in one evening. And they had balloons, a used-car lot and sponsorship from a beer company. Would Harp oblige over here, or will we have to wait till the GLC's return for outside funding? We really must invite the Eurocomrades back, though. □

Weekend competition

No 2935 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

It may not be long till the world is merely an aggregation of theme parks. The latest, apparently, has been set up by Dolly Parton: Dollywood, offering country and western fun for the whole family. Could we have extracts from promotion material for similar personality parks: Maggiewood, Whitehousewood, Gillickwood, Double-Davidwood, etc. 150 words maximum, by 14 August.

No 2932 **Set by Red Dorn**

Royal wedding verse in the manner of Ted Hughes.

Report **By Red Dorn**

Every single one of you, as it turned out, did better than Hughes himself — including those, like an entire household in North End Road, who'd obviously never heard of him. Whether there was more to his work before his current Andrew Lloyd-Webber phase than blood, teeth and hyphens is, of course, debatable, but you seem to have got the gist of it. In the spirit of Brighton Council I have had to 'reclassify' those entries dwelling on the Night rather than the Wedding — leaving these (£8 each) and a lot more if only we had space.

Mrs Crumb
Watches in the curtained daylight
The mouth of the bride on TV.
Tigrish, inviting,
The teeth meet, portcullis-tight.
And he, Bengal-brazen, an armed skull,
After fanfares and vows
Will commit, between royal sheets,
The snarling, sunflower-brilliant violence
Which Mr Crumb,
With his false teeth baby-pink in the glass,
Never quite achieved.

ALISON PRINCE

Pomp.
Pomp there must be and pompous prelates and peers.

Prelates in purple of old blood;
Peers sporting the myriad skins of slaughtered winter stoats
And everywhere scarlet.

Scarlet Guardsmen with their numbered buttonings;
Scarlet is the colour of their trade and they flash blood-seeking bayonets
and swords flash too while the cannon salute.

Behind the still, steel-tipped scarlet fence the people cheer.
There are no red flags here
But the blood-line is secured.

JOHN STANLEY

First the wedding of fire and paper
Second the wedding of claws and flesh

Now old stones echo solemn music
Perfect as a hyena's chuckle

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And the royal groom stands by the altar-rail
Proud as an owl

His bride's fine haunches are curtained by lace
White as a rat's teeth

And the worm that lurks deep in her bouquet
Wriggles like a happy secret

When her shining eyes marry the future
Like a goat's tongue marrying a thistle.

GEORGE SIMMERS

The sky stormed bells.
The dead weight of a dynasty pressed on his skull.
Money polluted his veins
Like a hereditary disease,
Shovelled through his bowels
Like a parasite,
Like himself.

A rictus crucified his jaw.

A terrible crowd applauded.

He heard from a great distance
Like the cleaving of sheet iron, the words,
'I will.'

GERARD BENSON

Crow went to the Abbey.

First the man came
Silent, with a sword.

Then the woman came
Sacrificial, white.

Crow honed his beak on a skull of stone
And waited.

'I will' said the man. He would.
'I will' said the woman. She would, too.

They both would.

And then they were sucked into the screaming light.

Crow went off to look for lugworms.

NOEL PETTY

His chopper was fast, furious.
Her face was warm, freshly speckled,
Hair the red of a water-vole.
Soon they would be spliced, like mainsails.

Such glut of quick blue blood
Bloats Britain, drowns crowds in its bilges.
Now breathless, their mouths open,
Gasping like landed catfish.

The garble of ceremony!
It baffles them in slabbed abbey,
Which, packed with rich pilchards,
Launches them sleek in royal oil.

WILL BELLENGER

Blood-haired wedding wench lurks
white-clad, waiting for torment-trumpets
to blast her body along sacerdotal stones.
Guest-faces vie with gargoyles, god-gruesome
as music murks praise with posturing pomp.
Scrawlers hack hysteria from crowds,
drool-drenched.

Now practised, princely poker is ready
for that one, polo player-procreated.
Noise dies as silence stamps a pause.

Crow-faced preacher croaks
and finger fucks ring.

Queen smiles.

RODRICK CLAYTON

Salamanca 110

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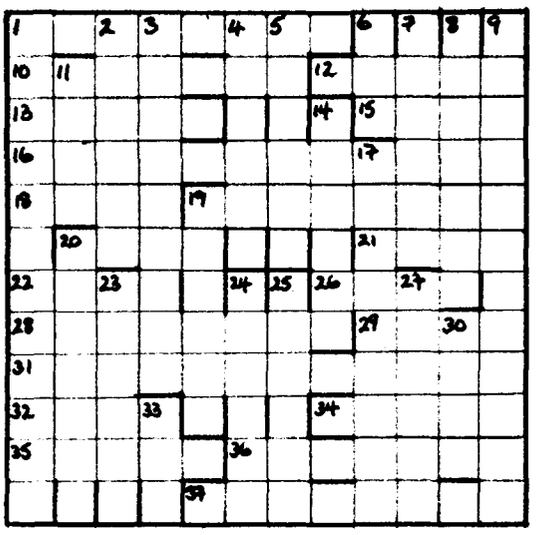
PRIZE: £35 cheque for the first correct solution opened. Entries to Salamanca 110, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 2 September.



Clues and answers are of the following types: p — puns etc., of classical origin to be entered normally (part of 9 will be found in Collins Dictionary); a, b, c, d — four unclued words each of which govern other normal answers which must be accordingly adjusted before entry; g — each answer entered normally but with the addition of an extra letter (clued) caused by a crossing answer, and the extra letters could spell gods/goddess who interfere in human affairs (DIS, ISIS, TYCHE, WODEN).

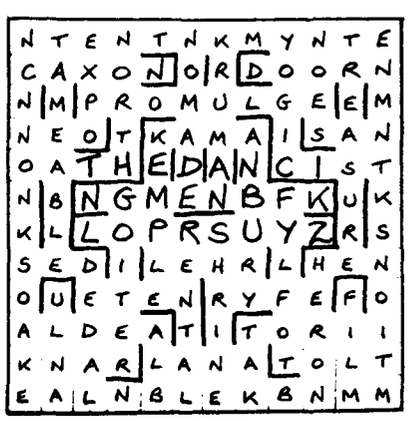
ACROSS

1p As trod by the Roman beekeeper? (2 words, 8)
10g See sloths back to back in tree (6)
12g Censor showing love for one in plants (4)
13g Now I'd get converted to God (4)
15g My colleague, showing some depression (3)
16p Wherein we find Leander's reputation? (2 words, 12)
18g Only strenuously employed by digger (3)
19g For these water-plants goddess requires earth and water (7)
20c See 14
21g My royal route timelessly winding (3)
22g Marks made in former times in wood (3)
26g Expresses surprise, tears shed (3)
28g One of those youths of Ephesus who lies soft ere being roused (7)
29g Slave plot (3)
31p Which was heard far and wide to defy barbarian attacks? (2 words, 12)
32g Bird, and what it produces, tail first? (3)
34 WORD a (5)
35g Pale and hard, being surrounded by the opposite (4)
36d Name southern grouping (of stars) (5)
37 WORD b (8)

DOWN

1p Canine weak-spot? (3 words, 12)
2b Like some house walls I'd see, perhaps, finally completely covered? (4)
3a One repairman who'll improve things (7)
4 & 24p Which carried Pegasus on his last journey? (2 words, 12)
5b Friendly power, this? (4)
6p The wooden horse? (3)
7b Give up during race despairingly (4)
8d They show what's on hills most observe no longer (5)
9p Which Jason and co. were itching to get their jolly hands on? (2 words, 12)
11g Fuss caused by a Northern bird (notice egg —?) (3)
14 & 20Ac WORD c (10)
17a Who, after working, go home and are hard to leave? (7)
19g Cooked pie has fish of a sort (5)
20g Beasts, cross with Master, bear one (6)
23 WORD d (6)
24p See 4
25c Caution needed with monster that's wild — son etc. escaping this (8)
27p Goddess receptive to supplicants? (6)
30g Mythical flier — Icarus, say, certainly not a one (3)
33c 'Harp' spelt incorrectly strangles Scots (9)

Solution to Salamanca 109



The quotation 'I am fairly familiar with all forms of secret writing(s)' is said by Holmes in *The Dancing Men*.

Prizewinner to Salamanca 109
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NUPE, Britains fifth largest Trade Union, has decided to appoint an Equal Rights Officer. The successful applicant, who will hold a senior position on our Organising Staff, will have prime responsibility for advising the Union on all aspects of race and other equal rights issues. She or he will service the newly-established Race National Advisory Committee, and will be required to work closely with the Women's Officer.

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Application forms may be obtained by writing on a postcard to Maureen Underwood, National Union of Public Employees, 20 Grand Depot Road, London SE18 6SF, to whom they should be returned by **29 August 1986.**

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ADVENTUROUS YOUNG woman sought by caring, mature man. Aware, considerate, non-smoker, left-wing, solvent and unorthodox. Home and exciting, life-style offered. Box (31)3463. N31.11

ATTRACTIVE BLONDE Secretary, affectionate, happy disposition, recently returned from the States, 30, seeks sincere, good standing gentleman for happy, serious relationship (Oxon). Box (31)3487 or tel. 0235 26471. N31.12

ATTRACTIVE YOUNG woman artist, 26, would like to meet adventurous man engaged in original research or enterprise, 25-30, for sensitive, mutual enjoyment. London. Box (31)3462. N31.13

HEARTSEARCH CONTINUED ON PAGE 34

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HEARTSEARCH

Cont'd from p.33

AUTHOR, 54, Manchester, cerebral-sensual type, seeks like-minded female companion, with view to sharing life's pleasures, including holiday cottage September. Box (31)3457. N31.14

CHINESE, PROFESSIONAL, female, attractive, slim, warm and very caring, given the chance. Seeks tallish, unattached 35-45 academic/entrepreneur man of means, who also wants a caring and lasting relationship. Genuine replies. Photo/phone. Box (30)3439. N30.9

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ECCENTRIC MALE, 37, Oxford degree, CV getting worse, hoping for a comeback with a lady friend. I am open and warm. Bradford, Yorks. Telephone number please. Box (31)3471. N31.15

EX-MERCHANT SEAMAN, 6ft tall, 50s, divorced, own home in Somerset, seeks feminine female, any age. All replies answered. Box (31)3460. N31.16

EXCEPTIONAL, CREATIVE, non-smoking, galant squire, 35-55, sought by attractive, cuddly, blonde wench (writer/artist/photographer) to share Italian holiday in September. Venice booked. Photo appreciated. Box (31)3484. N31.17

FLAME-HAIRED, freckle-faced, but otherwise completely un-regal female (27), seeks interesting socialist male, for courtship ritual and possible pairbonding. Manchester. Box (31)3464. N31.18

FRISKY, RISQUE, yachty sailor, needs adventurous female for big trip, Med. Take a leap into the sun, I might be just what you need. Box (30)3453. N30.11

GENERAL SECOND-HAND bookseller, 34, 5' 8", dark, shop South East London, interested art, sociology, theatre, philosophy, gardening. Seeks female companion with similar interests. Box (31)3461. N31.19

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I'M BUGGED by cat fleas, gnat hordes and other (fewer-legged) creepies, so where's that tall, humorous, bug-repelling male, who can appreciate a warm, attractive and creative, young (mid 40s) woman? Central London. Box (30)3454. N30.14

'IT TAKES two to be glad'. Cosmopolitan woman, Guardian reader, Radio 3 listener, hopes to meet youthful man (over 55), friendly, thinking and humorous. London Box (31)3488. N31.21

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ENTERPRISING, EDUCATED, perceptive professional woman, late forties, offers warm, caring relationship to right man, 50s-60. Seeking educated man to share wining and dining, discussion and argument, explore London and relationships, travel, most other NS interests. Observer reader preferred. **Box (30) 3432**

MALE GRADUATE, 27, slim, fit, single, likes: sports, countryside, loves children, own flat, seeks interesting female company, preferably similar age, also Russian speakers – male/female! Box (31)3467. N31.22

MUSIC-LOVING London woman, 43, broken heart nicely mended, would-be gardener, *seeks new pastures in male company, similar* age. Box (31)3458. N31.23

OLD FRIENDS: an introduction agency for the over forties. Loneliness is not inevitable. Details from: Anne Brent, 18a Highbury New Park, London N5 2DB. N16.31

PROFESSIONAL MALE graduate, 32, recently moved to London, seeks attractive female for sensual fun and sincere friendship. I enjoy good food, wine, theatre and weekends in Paris. Box (30)3436. N30.22

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TALL, AUDACIOUS widow, 60+, sexually active, enjoys life, cultured interests: travel, music, theatre etc., seeks like-minded professional gentleman occasional companionship. London/Avon. Box (31)3481. N31.27

VEGETATING VEGETARIAN lady, late forties, considered attractive, slim, widowed, principled, keen sense of humour, compassionate, seeks like-minded gentleman for companionship. NE/W/Essex. Box (31)3470. N31.28

WARM, ATTRACTIVE, graduate woman, forties, divorced, home-loving, seeks unattached, professional man for close relationship, which could develop further. Interests: family life, walking, music, travel. London. Box (29)3406. N29.36

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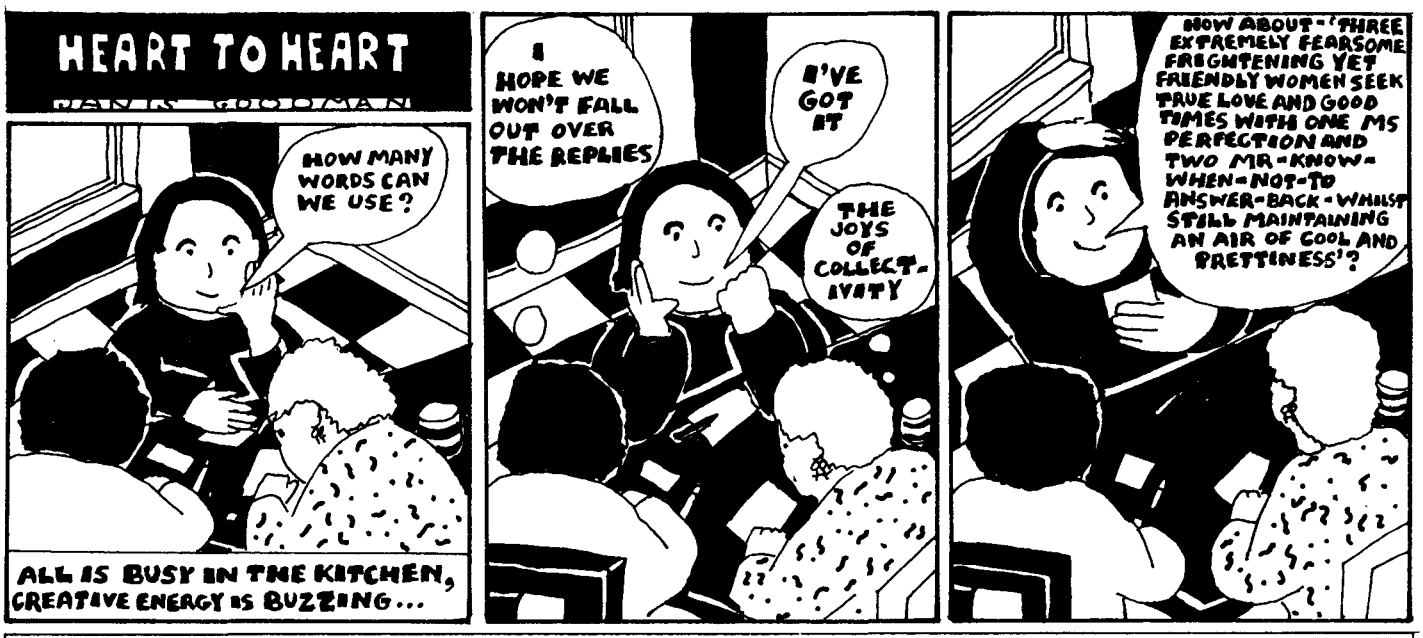

HEART TO HEART
HOW MANY WORDS CAN WE USE?
I HOPE WE WON'T FALL OUT OVER THE REPLIES
I'VE GOT IT
THE JOYS OF COLLECT-IVITY
NOW ABOUT - 'THREE EXTREMELY FEARSOME FRIGHTENING YET FRIENDLY WOMEN SEEK TRUE LOVE AND GOOD TIMES WITH ONE MS PERFECTION AND TWO MR-KNOW-WHEN-NOT-TO ANSWER-BACK - WHILST STILL MAINTAINING AN AIR OF COOL AND PRETTINESS'?
ALL IS BUSY IN THE KITCHEN, CREATIVE ENERGY IS BUZZING...

CHESS

LATE LAST Friday evening I was sitting on the *Tor Britannia* out of Gothenburg trying to decide whether it was better to have a monopoly in stamps or alcohol. If you want to buy a bottle of wine or spirits in Sweden you have to go to *Systembolaget*, state alcohol stores that bear an uncanny resemblance to British post offices. There to stand in a long queue, probably feeling guilty about the intended purchase, which is presumably the point of the system. Stamps, however, are as ubiquitously available as booze is in Britain. Concluding that I didn't like either arrangement much, I returned to playing through a game I had copied down.

Someone walking past did a double-take, pointed to the name 'Renman', and exclaimed 'But that's my game!' 'Not Nils-Gustaf?' said I. 'That I am', he replied, and so he was. After a coincidence like that I really must give the game, which is in any case a nice example of how the Exchange French can be far from drawish.

Brinck-Claussen (Denmark) — Renman (Sweden), Norrköping 1986.

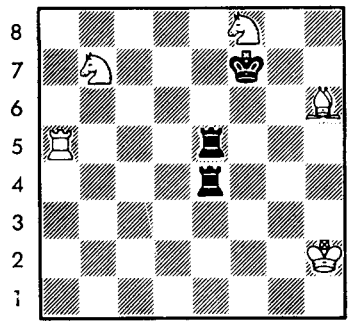
1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. exd5 exd5 4. Bd3 Nc6. 5. c3 Bd6 6. h3 Nf6 7. Qf3 0-0 8. Ne2 Re8 9. Bg5 Be7 10. Be3 White has the aggressive plan Nf4 and g4-g5, so Black needs something energetic. **Ne4! 11. Bxe4** This may be playable, but 11. Nd2! is a lot safer. **dxe4 12. Qxe4 Nb4! 13. Kd1** Hardly desirable, but 13. 0-0 Bd6 + . . . Nc2 and 13. Na3 Bh4 14. Qf3 Nd3+ are both worse. **Nd5 14. Qf3** Possibly 14. Nf4!? is an improvement, though Nils and I agreed we would rather be Black after 14 . . . Nxe3+ 15. fxe3 Bd6 16. Qf3 c5. **c5 15. Nd2 b5 16. dxc5 Bb7 17. Bd4 b4! 18. Qg3 Bf6 19. c4 Qe7! 20. Rel Bxd4 21. cxd5 Bxd5** With a series of forceful moves Black has gained a great advantage — bishop pair, enemy K in the centre, more mobile major pieces. White avoids the worst only by shedding pawns. **22. Qd6 Bxf2 23. Qxe7 Rxe7 24. Rfl Bxc5 25. Rf5! Rd8 26. Nf4 Bf2! 27. Ne6 Rxe6 28. Rxf2 Rde8 29. Kc2 Re2 30. Rxe2 Rxe2 31. Kd3 Rxg2** and Renman had no difficulty in exploiting his material advantage (0-1, 40).

Perhaps the coincidence, though striking, was not so surprising at a time when chessplayers from all over the world are making a pilgrimage to London for the Kasparov v Karpov match. Most people favour Kasparov, the younger man, the more dynamic player. Having some sympathy with Karpov's view that he has had a bad press in the West, I feel we ought to be rather more generous towards the ex-champion. On his record of tournament play and title defences Karpov must be rated the strongest of all world champions, surpassing even such great ones as Lasker, Capablanca, Alekhine and Fischer. Kasparov has yet to prove to be stronger still.

But isn't it strange how Karpov's opponents in big matches have all emerged from the ordeal with the bitterest feelings against him? Little Tolya seems pretty inoffensive, yet he provokes such hatred and loathing. Well, in general world championship contenders do not stay on good terms for long. One might wonder whether they ever have. In just one instance, I think, and that, funnily enough, was Fischer against Spassky in spite of the stormy course of their 1972 match. Whoever wins this time, we can be sure that the loser will not take that as settling matters, but will grimly set himself to prepare for revenge in 1987.

Problem

White to play and win. Look out for a very pretty mate.



Solution

1. Nd6 + Kg8 2. Ra8! Rh4 + 3. Kg3 Rxh6 4. Ne6 + Kh7 5. Ra7 + Kg8 6. Nf4 + Kf8 7. Rf7 + Kg8 8. Rf5 + ! Rxf5 9. Ne4 mate. A marvellous collaborative concoction by Gurgenidze and Nadareishvili.

George Botterill

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This England

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☐ Five-year-old Amy Gooding is the new world snail racing champion after her snail Solarium Sal beat 119 others at Congham, Norfolk, at the weekend. It covered a 13 in. course on a damp cloth in 2 mins. 51 secs. to win the prize of a silver tankard. — *Yorkshire Evening Post* (W. Goerke)

☐ A £700,000 sports hall which will double as an operations bunker in a nuclear attack is planned for Spalding, Lincs. The district council is seeking a £100,000 grant. — *The Times* (Derek Morgan)

☐ The bright young things who have joined the paper are rather non-plussed with the selection of watering holes round about so have set about collecting information on local hostelries with a view to buying one of their own. — *UK Press Gazette* (Mike Ashton)

☐ Looking at an exhibition reconstruction of Windsor Castle as it was in Norman times, the Queen Mother reportedly remarked: 'Wasn't it nice before Slough was there?' — *The Star* (George Moor)

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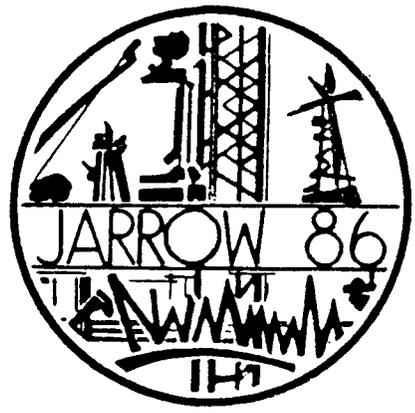
THE TRUTH IS ON THE MARCH



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In October, a major touring theatre show opens in JARROW, and tours down the route, playing in every town where the marchers stop. A contemporary show, an epic for *our* times.

In October, a series of concerts start – top artists leading the campaign against unemployment, the campaign for a Labour Government and a future that works.

In October, JARROW 86 will become the political event of the year, a unique combination of cultural events and campaigning, of marching and celebrating.

But it needs your help. Please join Neil Kinnock, Tony Benn and the numerous other sponsors of JARROW 86 by making a donation. Or ask your Labour Party, Trade Union or group to join the hundreds of affiliated organisations in a celebration of unity and purpose.

A year before a General Election, it can make all the difference.

In October, the Truth really will be on the March. Help it take the first step.

Yes, I'd like to support JARROW 86 and campaign against unemployment.
*I enclose £5 to become an individual sponsor plus a donation of £*_____
Please send me details about HEADS HELD HIGH, the play for JARROW '86, on tour from Jarrow to Edgware throughout October, and at London's Shaw Theatre in November ☐

Please send details of march ☐
*Name*_____
*Organisation (if any)*_____
*Address*_____

Please return to: JARROW 86, THE ELECTRIC PRESS FACTORY, 39 COOKRIDGE STREET, LEEDS LS1 3DW.

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